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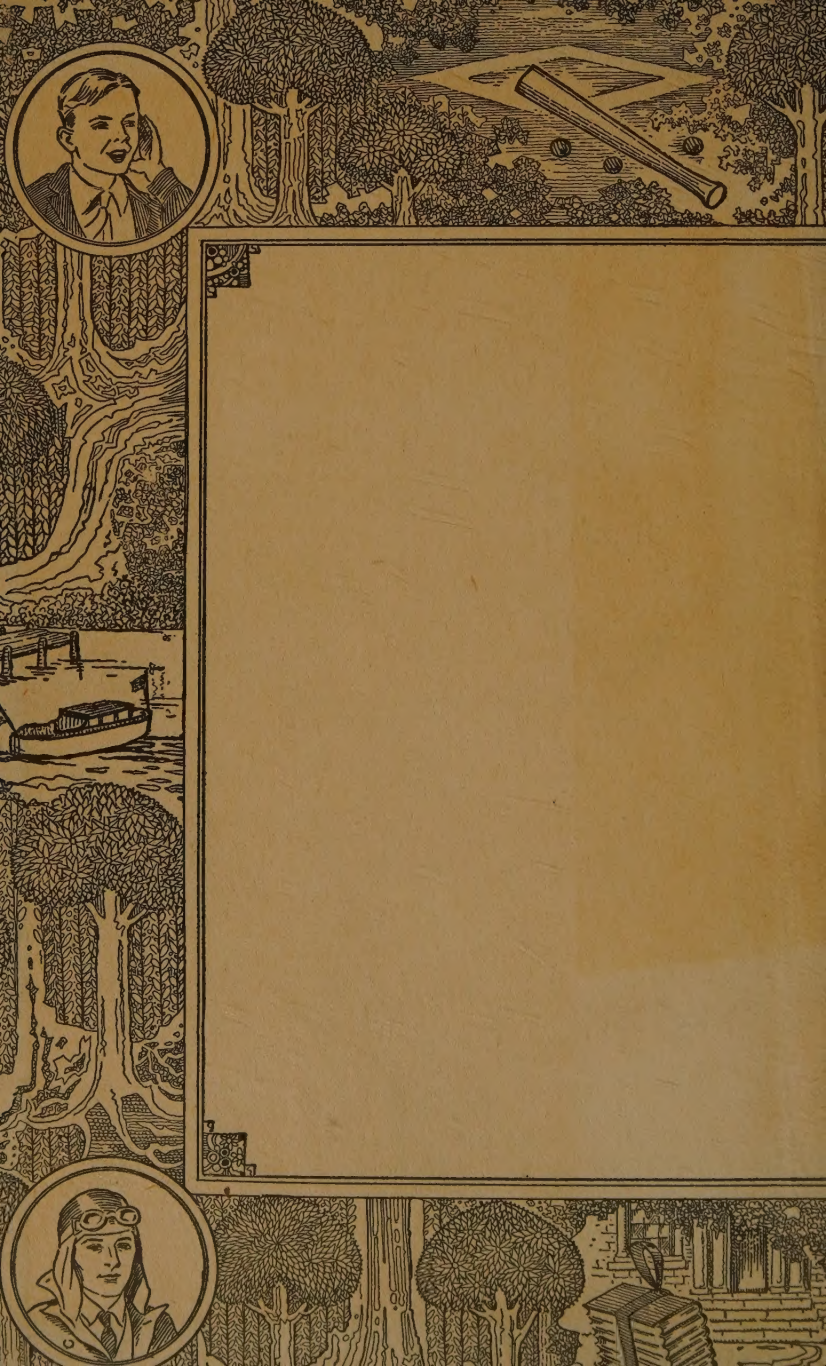

This is my Book
From

To Eileen
from
Mother

Christmas, 1937

HERE, TRICKS, HERE!

Tricks's first appearance

Here, Tricks, Here!

BY

LEBBEUS MITCHELL

AUTHOR OF

"One Boy Too Many" and "The Circus Comes to Town"

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HERE, TRICKS, HERE!

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CHAPTER I

A DOG WITHOUT A MASTER

BARRY CAYLISS turned from watching the other children sailing toy boats on the miniature lake in Forest Park for a glance at his sister, Ethel, aged seven, who was hugging a dilapidated Teddy bear to her heart and crooning softly to it.

It was at that very moment that Barry realized he was hungry, with that sudden gnawing hunger that may overwhelm a growing boy at any moment of the day.

"I 'm hungry," he announced. "I wonder how late it is?"

"Why, it 's not half-way to supper-time yet," Ethel replied, and then added reflectively, "Ice-cream would be good."

"Ice-cream tastes good, but it 's not filling," objected Barry. "I 'm hungry enough to eat most any old thing—meat or something."

Barry's symptoms of hunger seemed to be contagious, for now Ethel exclaimed, "So 'm I hungry." But then Ethel sooner or later felt almost every sensation her brother felt, thought almost everything he thought, for she looked up to Barry, who would soon be nine, with an adoration that would have been pathetic had it not been so genuinely returned by Barry.

"I saw a lunch-wagon just outside the park gate as we came in," Barry said. "Let 's go and see what we can get."

"All right, let 's," agreed Ethel. "But I don't want to walk home this time. How much money 've you got? More 'n enough to pay car-fare?"

Barry, official custodian of their funds, fished several coins out of his pocket and counted them—a dime, two nickels, and three pennies.

"Twenty-three cents," he announced. "Enough to get home on and buy a sandwich or something. Come on."

He helped Ethel to her feet, and hand in hand they started for the park gate. The lunch-wagon was still there, and the white-aproned, jolly-faced man who leaned over the little counter that projected out of the middle of the wagon's side greeted them cheerfully.

"Had a good time in the park?" he inquired.

"Yes, sir," replied Barry, "but we 're hungry. We want something to eat."

"Something that does n't cost more 'n a nickel apiece, please," supplemented Ethel.

"Something that 's filling," added Barry.

"You want a hot-dog," observed the white-aproned man decisively. "That 's filling and costs only a nickel apiece."

So they bought two "hot-dogs," which the man took out of a steaming pan, placing each between the halves of a bun that he sliced deftly in two with a long-bladed knife.

"Better let them cool a little," he advised. "They 're so hot they 'll burn your mouths."

They wandered back into the park and sat down on the first bench they found, near a clump of bushes. They had eaten a bite apiece, and Barry was on the point of taking a second mouthful when a sudden, sharp bark caused him to look up.

There at one end of the bench, just coming out of the bushes, was a Boston bulldog, standing up on his hind legs and waving his fore paws as though striving to balance himself in that precarious position.

Ethel, who was rather afraid of strange ani-

mals, was startled and moved back against Barry's side with such a sudden jerk that the upper half of her sandwich fell to the ground.

The dog pounced upon it hungrily.

"It 's got half of my sandwich!" Ethel fretted.

"Never mind; you can have part of mine," Barry comforted her. He handed her the upper half of his bun and then noticed that the dog was not eating the food in his mouth. He still stood on his hind legs, with the half-bun between his teeth, and looked straight at Ethel with pleading eyes.

Barry felt a sudden thrill of sympathy for the dog.

"He 's offering it to you!" he exclaimed. "He has n't eaten any of it."

"I don't want it now, after it 's been in his mouth. He can have it."

"Good dog," said Barry, patting its head. "Eat it."

But the dog made no move to obey. He acknowledged Barry's words with a wag of his stubby tail and a quick, hungry look from his soft, golden-yellow eyes and then returned his gaze to Ethel's face.

"He knows it 's yours and is offering it to *you!*" cried Barry. "You tell him to eat it."

Ethel's interest was now aroused, and she timidly stretched out a patting hand.

"Good doggie. Eat it."

The animal proved the correctness of Barry's supposition by immediately gulping down the entire half-bun.

"He knows a lot for a dog," said Barry. "I wonder who he belongs to? I wish I had a dog like him."

"Father would n't let you keep it anyhow, Barry. He says the city 's no place for a dog."

"I wished we lived in the country."

"I don't. I hate the country."

The animal still stood on his hind legs, his fore paws dangling in the air as though broken at the first joint; his eyes were fixed pleadingly on the boy's.

"He 's still hungry," observed Barry. "I 'm going to give him part of my sandwich. I bet he 's hungrier than I am."

Bit by bit, Barry gave him the remainder of his sandwich, and then Ethel began feeding him.

When the last bite of food had disappeared,

the dog licked Ethel's hand, then came and rested his fore paws and his nose on Barry's knees. The boy patted the head and pulled the clipped ears gently. The eyes looking up into his never wavered.

"I wish we could take him home," sighed Barry.

"Maybe he 'll follow us, Barry. Father can't blame us if the dog tags after us all the way home."

"Nice old doggie," said Barry, patting his head. "Did you have enough to eat?"

Then a curious thing happened. The dog threw himself upon the ground as though in convulsions, turned on his back, pawed the air with all four feet, and then subsided into quiescence, lying on his side, his eyes closed.

The children were startled.

"He 's dead!" exclaimed Ethel, aghast. "Maybe the sandwich was poisoned!"

"Then we 'd be dead, too, Ethel."

"What 's the matter with him, then?"

"Maybe he ate too much after being starved. I heard Father say once that a starving man should n't eat but a tiny bit of food at first."

"But it 's not a man. It 's a dog."

Barry stooped and touched the dog's head in trepidation. At his touch, one of the animal's eyes opened slowly, a snapping gleam of light in it.

"He 's not dead!" cried Barry in relief. "He 's just playing dead! He 's a trick dog—maybe from a circus. Here, doggie, here! Come on. That 's a good dog!"

Despite his urgings, the dog remained huddled on the ground, his stump of a tail wagging furiously.

"Why does n't he get up?" asked Ethel. "If he can wag his tail that hard, he can get up, can't he?"

"If he 's a trick dog there 's some one command he 'll get up at," answered Barry excitedly. "He 'll wait for it to be given."

"For days and days?"

"I guess so, if he 's a real good trick dog."

"Till he dies of starvation?"

Barry found himself not quite so certain on that point.

"Maybe not quite that long—almost, though, I should think."

"I bet he 'd get up and follow us if we went

out of sight," ventured Ethel, speaking a little more decisively than she really felt.

"No, he would n't," Barry asserted confidently. "He 'd wait a long time."

"Let 's try him and see."

"All right. Come on."

He took his sister's hand, and they walked rapidly away from the dog, soon passing from his sight behind some shrubbery. They waited what seemed to Barry a long time—ten minutes or more—but what in reality was not much more than two minutes.

"There," whispered Barry in triumph; "he 's waiting for us to come back."

"Let 's call him," suggested Ethel.

"That would n't be fair," objected Barry, "to want him to do one thing and to tell him to do something else."

"Try, anyway. I will." Ethel called to the dog repeatedly, but he did not appear.

Barry crept around where he could see the animal between two blooming lilac-bushes; he lay there on the ground as though dead.

A flood of affection for the dog surged through him; his faith was justified. If he could only have a dog like that! He would give anything in the world almost—except

Ethel and his father and mother—for a pet that could perform such tricks.

"He 's a trick dog all right," he called to Ethel. "Come on back. He won't stir till he gets the right command."

They returned to the bench. The dog's eyes gleamed through narrowed slits, and his stump of a tail wiggled frantically. His muscles were tense as though he had been on the point of springing from the ground. Yet he remained motionless except for the wagging of his tail.

"If we knew his name and called him by it he might get up," observed Ethel.

The dog started at Ethel's words and seemed on the point of springing from the ground, but almost immediately relaxed back into his tense, waiting position.

"I 'm going to call him Tricks," Barry breathlessly announced. "He 's a trick dog, and that would be a good name for him."

"What 's the good of making up a name for him if you can't keep him?"

Barry apparently did not hear her words.

"Here, Tricks, here!" he called and started to run away, calling again and again, "Here, Tricks, here!"

A smothered "Woof" escaped from the dog's mouth, and the tips of his ears jerked in his frantic desire to run after the boy.

"He almost got up," called Ethel. Again, at her words, the dog seemed on the point of springing up, but did not do so. "He wiggled all over when I said 'got up'; there, he 's doing it again! You tell him to get up, Barry. I believe he 's just waiting for you to tell him."

Barry raced back, breathless with excitement.

"Here, Tricks, get up!" he commanded. "Come now, jump up!"

He thought for a moment he had hit on the right words, for a series of tremors ran over the dog's body. In a moment, however, he was quiet again except for his tail. It kept vigorously whacking the ground.

"The word 'up' must be in the right command," said Barry despairingly, "but how am I to figure out the rest of it? We can't go off and leave him there on the ground to die of starvation—"

"We could bring him some food every day," interposed Ethel.

"Yes, we might," Barry acquiesced, "but what if somebody else should hit upon the right

command when I was n't here? Tricks would follow him off, then. We 've just got to keep on till we hit it."

"Well, let 's hurry and use 'up' with every word we can think of. We 'll get a scolding if we are out much later."

So the children started in with "Get up" and "Jump up," which they had used before, and went on to "Climb up" and "Stand up," but all to no avail. The dog announced with wagging tail and quivering leg muscles that they had almost hit upon the right words, but the exact phrase eluded them.

"Why won't you get up?" Barry at last half sobbed in despair, as the sun began to sink below the tree-tops. "Up! Up!"

With a loud bark of joy the dog sprang to his feet and ran around and around Barry, leaping upon him and licking his face and hands with warm, moist tongue.

"We 've got it!" exclaimed Barry excitedly, and he sank on his knees and hugged the wriggling animal tight to his side. "It 's 'Up! up!' "

It would have been difficult for any chance passer-by to tell whether boy or dog was the more excited and affectionate. Ethel felt left

out in the cold, entirely forgotten. A vague jealousy of Tricks, as both she and Barry already thought of the dog in their minds, stirred within her.

"It 's time for us to go home," she reminded Barry.

"All right, let 's go." Reluctantly Barry rose to his feet, resting a hand on the dog's head.

"What are you going to do with that dog? We can't take him home with us. You know Father would n't have him about the place."

Barry stooped and gave Tricks a last hug, then moved away. "Let 's start and see what he 'll do."

They started for the park gate. Barry's heart sank with each step, believing it took him that much farther from the dog. After a time he looked around.

Tricks was walking sedately at his heels!

"He 's following us!" Barry cried in triumph, his heart giving a great leap of joy. "He *is* lost!"

"What 'll you say to Father?" asked Ethel.

"I don't know." Barry swallowed at the lump that his sister's words brought up into his throat. "We can't help it if he *will* follow us."

"We have n't tried driving him away," rejoined Ethel. "Go away, doggie! Go on back!"

Tricks gave her a fleeting glance and wagged his stubby tail and paid no further attention to her. He kept close at Barry's heels.

"You try, Barry," Ethel urged. "He won't pay the least attention to me."

Reluctantly Barry turned to Tricks, the lump in his throat getting harder and bigger and rising higher. He knew his father would not like it if he took the dog home, yet how could he drive it away when the dog seemed to want him as much as he did the dog?

"Go—go away, Tricks!" he cried with a half-sob, shutting his eyes. "Go back!"

Tricks gave the boy's hand a swift lick, sat down on his haunches, and persistently refused to listen to Barry's further half-hearted attempts to drive him off. "Go on, Tricks; go back. We don't want you."

His words were not true, and in a passion of repentance for them and of desire for the dog Barry knelt on the gravel walk and put his arms about Tricks's neck.

"I *do* want you, Tricks! I do! But Father won't let me keep you. You must go away."

With each word he hugged the dog's neck tighter. Tricks looked into his eyes for an instant, then licked his adopted master's cheek.

"Come on, Ethel. Let 's go home. I can't drive him away. He won't go."

"Take a stick to him," advised Ethel.

"No," said Barry. "Father can drive him away if he wants to. I can't."

He started on, and now Tricks walked at his side. Ethel followed, a slight pucker of dissatisfaction on her brow. Perhaps she dimly perceived that Tricks might make a great difference in the close relationship between her brother and herself. A sudden and more intense feeling of dislike and jealousy of the dog came over her. She almost hoped that her father *would* drive Tricks way.

The boy and girl were absorbed in their own thoughts about Tricks and did not hear the powerful limousine that whirred suddenly around a curve in the drive. It was almost upon them when a frantic honking of its siren warned them of danger.

Ethel was so startled that she dropped her beloved Teddy bear. At the same moment Barry grasped her by the arm and pushed her

back up against the shrubbery that bordered the road.

"Oh, Barry! Teddy! I dropped Teddy! He 'll get run over!" she cried in great distress, and hid her eyes on his shoulder.

"Tricks!" gasped Barry, and Ethel looked up to see the dog, with the Teddy bear in his mouth, jump out of the way of the big motor-car as it whirred past them. Tricks must have seized the toy in his mouth the very instant Ethel dropped it, for the automobile had been almost upon them when they first heard its frantic honking.

As Tricks came up to her bearing her darling Teddy, Ethel dropped on her knees and hugged both the bear and the dog. All her jealousy of Tricks vanished for the time being into thin air.

"Oh, you darling Tricks!" she cried, and the dog, as if acknowledging the new bond between them, licked her hands and had but a swift glance for Barry as he patted his head and said, "Good old Tricks!"

Then they started for home, Tricks walking sedately between them, a hand of each occasionally patting his back.

CHAPTER II

TRICKS FINDS A WAY

AS Barry and Ethel opened the gate into the yard of their home very quietly so that it would not creak, they heard the clink of dishes and knew they were late for their supper. They felt that if Tricks should be once introduced into the household before Mr. Cayliss had an opportunity to forbid it, there was just a bare chance that they might be allowed to keep him for a day or two. So they tiptoed along the board walk to the kitchen door.

The screen, however, swollen at the top, stuck so tightly that it rattled as Barry pulled it open. The sound evidently reached their parents' ears, for Mrs. Cayliss called from the dining-room:

"Well, it 's high time you children were home. What made you so late?"

"Your mother has been worrying about you," Mr. Cayliss told them. "I can't let you

go out to the park alone if you can't be home in time for your supper."

Barry placed a hand about Trick's nose and held his jaws shut for fear he would bark before they got him into the house. He was so occupied with this that he forgot to reply to his parents. He knew they could not see him from their places at the table.

"We 're all right, Mother," Ethel called, "but I 'm so hungry I don't know what to do."

"Serves you right for being late," her father's voice replied. "What kept you?"

Ethel waited for her brother to speak, but Barry could not think of the right answer on the spur of the moment.

"What shall we tell him?" whispered Ethel.

"We 'll have to tell about Tricks," Barry answered.

"What are you children whispering about? Come in here and answer my question." Their father's voice had become stern, and Barry did not dare refrain from replying any longer. He pushed Ethel into the dining-room and stuck his head far enough in so that he could see his father. One hand he kept firmly about the dog's jaws.

"We found a circus-dog in the park that

performs tricks," he explained ungrammatically. "He played dead, and we could n't find the right command to make him get up any sooner."

"You could have left him lying there—"

"But, Father," interrupted Barry eagerly, "he would have starved to death! We could n't leave him there as though he was dead, to starve."

"He would n't stir," Ethel added, "until we found the right words to say."

"Whose dog was it?" asked Mrs. Cayliss. "There 's been no circus in town this spring."

"We don't know," answered Barry. "He was lost, I guess. And hungry; but he would n't eat the half of Ethel's sandwich that fell to the ground until *she* told him he could have it. I told him to eat it, but he would n't —just stood there on his hind legs looking up at her."

"Why are you hanging back there in the kitchen?" asked Mr. Cayliss. "Take your place at the table."

"Yes, Father," but Barry turned and disappeared from his parents' sight for a moment in an effort to get Tricks to lie down.

"How strangely you act, Barry," observed

his mother. And then she said to her husband, "I believe they 've brought the dog home with them."

"Barry, have you got that dog in the kitchen?"

The tone in his father's voice brooked no delay in replying.

"Yes, Father. *I* could n't keep him from following us."

"We tried to drive him away," corroborated Ethel, "but he would n't go."

"Go get my cane, sir," came his father's peremptory voice. "We 'll see how long it takes *me* to drive him away."

"Oh, Father!" cried Ethel.

"I don't s-s-see your cane, Father," replied Barry meekly.

Tricks had pricked up his ears at Mr. Cayliss's command, and began running swiftly about the kitchen.

"It 's in the corner by the stove. Hurry up with it."

Slowly Barry obeyed. He had laid his hand on the crook of the cane when he felt a tug at it. Tricks had seized it in his mouth and was trying to pull it away from him! Barry let go, and to his astonishment Tricks stood up on his

hind legs, the stick in his mouth, and started for the dining-room door. The dog, however, got stuck in the doorway, the ends of the cane striking each jamb.

"Well, I declare!" exclaimed Mrs. Cayliss. "It *is* a trick dog!"

Tricks backed away, turned sidewise, and gave two or three ungainly hops which carried him through the door. He then walked deliberately over to the head of the table, where Mr. Cayliss sat, and waited for him to take the cane. Barry and Ethel remained in the doorway, their eyes shining with pride at the dog's new trick.

Mr. Cayliss was somewhat impressed himself, for he cleared his throat and made no motion for a time to take the proffered cane. When he did take it he laid it down on the floor instead of using it on Tricks.

"He 's an intelligent-looking dog," Mr. Cayliss said after a moment. "He *may* be from a circus."

"Then there will probably be a reward for his return," his wife suggested. "Could n't the children keep him until you 've had a chance to watch the newspapers and make inquiries?"

It was characteristic of Mrs. Cayliss to come

to her children's aid in this indirect and usually efficacious manner, and Barry and Ethel took heart.

"Here, Tricks!" called Barry, and when the dog came to him he fondled his muzzle and pulled his ears.

"Trix?" commented his father. "Where did you get such a name for the dog?"

"He 's a trick dog," replied Barry, "so I just called him 'Tricks.' It seemed to kind of fit him somehow."

"Hum, yes, perhaps it does. Well, you can put Tricks in the garage for the present. If there 's a reward offered for his return you and Ethel may have it."

"I 'd rather have Tricks," said Barry quickly.

"Would it be much money—the reward?" asked Ethel. "Enough to buy a tricycle?"

"Why, Ethel! You 'd rather have the reward than Tricks! And he saved Teddy when we almost got run over by an automobile!"

"What?" cried Mrs. Cayliss in frightened tones. "You almost got run over?"

"We were crossing the road," Barry explained, "when an auto came whizzing around a curve. *We* were all right, mother, but it nearly got Tricks. He stopped to pick up the

Teddy bear that Ethel dropped when I pushed her back out of the road."

"Why, you might have been killed!" Mrs. Cayliss exclaimed and turned pale.

"Now, don't get frightened, Helen," Mr. Cayliss besought her. "They are home safe and sound. Barry, did you look where you were going? If you and Ethel go out alone you must always watch out for her when you are crossing streets or the park driveways."

"I—I think I forgot," murmured Barry.

"Forgot!" stormed his father. "For—"

"It was because he felt so bad," Ethel interrupted quickly.

"Felt so bad? What about?"

"About your not letting him keep Tricks."

"You used to have a dog when you were a boy, Robert," said Mrs. Cayliss. "You 've often told me how badly you felt when he died."

Mr. Cayliss said nothing for a moment; then he turned to Barry and laid his hand gently on his son's head.

"Does a dog mean so much to you, Barry?"

"Tricks does."

"Then if we don't find the owner, you may keep the dog—for a while, anyway."

"Oh, Father!" cried Barry rapturously, and again, "Oh, Father!" without apparently being able to think of anything else to say.

"I think he deserves to have a dog, Robert," Mrs. Cayliss observed. "He 's always wanted one ever since he was a little baby. I hope you 'll let him keep Tricks."

"We 'll see—if the owner does n't show up," interposed Mr. Cayliss. "We must first make an effort to find the dog's master. He may be a most valuable animal."

He examined Tricks carefully, the latter submitting without a protest.

"He has every indication of being a blooded Boston bulldog, and a most intelligent one. I would n't be surprised if he were worth two hundred dollars."

"Two hundred dollars!" exclaimed Barry.

"Impossible!" cried his mother. "No dog is worth that much."

"At any rate, a pedigreed Boston bulldog is too valuable for us to keep without making an effort to find the owner. I 'll put a 'found' advertisement in the 'News' to-morrow."

"But, Father," protested Barry, "anybody could *say* Tricks belonged to him!"

"Any one who claims him will have to tell what breed he is, describe him accurately, and tell some of the tricks he can do."

Barry was satisfied with that, and his generally happy disposition enabled him to put the future possibility of losing Tricks almost out of his mind while he enjoyed having him for the time being. Out in the garage, after supper, aided by his father, he gave the dog a thorough washing and drying.

Tricks emerged almost new, so white was the streak of hair down his forehead and breast and on his fore legs. His back and hind quarters were a beautiful, shiny brindle. On the little toe of his left front paw was a tuft of black hair.

Barry surveyed the clean and shining dog with a heart brimming with affection. If only he might keep Tricks! But resolutely he put that thought aside and made the most of the hours he had with him.

The next evening's "News" carried the following advertisement in the lost and found column:

FOUND, yesterday in Forest Park, a dog that performs various tricks. Owner may have same by

identifying the dog positively, without having seen him, and paying for this advertisement. Call at office of Robert Cayliss, architect, 225 North Woodman Avenue, between the hours of 2 and 5 P. M.

Mr. Cayliss showed the advertisement to his wife, and later Barry and Ethel studied it, Barry with sinking heart.

"Do you think Tricks's owner will come for him?" asked Ethel.

"I 'spose he will," responded Barry glumly.

"Perhaps the owner won't see the advertisement," Ethel tried to comfort him.

"He 'll be watching the papers," Barry asserted, refusing to be comforted. "I would. If I 'd had Tricks and lost him I 'd watch the papers every day."

"Why does n't he advertise in the 'News'?" questioned Ethel.

"Perhaps he did when Tricks was first lost, but it cost too much to keep it up."

"If Tricks is a circus-dog, his owner most probably is off traveling with the circus and 'll never see the 'News' with Father's ad in it," suggested Ethel.

"Somebody 'd read it and be sure to tell him," returned Barry.

But the boy took heart when his father re-

ported the next day that no one had called to see about a lost dog.

The advertisement was run again twice during the following week. One evening Mr. Cayliss reported that a man, a dark, thin man, had called in reference to the advertisement but had been unable to prove his ownership of the dog.

"He did n't want to say at first what breed of trick dog he had lost," reported Mr. Cayliss to his family, "but finally said it was a poodle-dog. I told him it was—"

"Father! You did n't tell him it was a Boston bulldog?" cried Barry in alarm.

"No, my boy. I told him it was not a poodle-dog that had been found. He tried to pump me, but, getting no satisfaction, soon went away. I don't believe he had lost any kind of dog, but just thought there was a chance of bluffing me into turning the one Barry found over to him."

"And can I keep Tricks now, Father?" asked Barry eagerly.

"The ad is to appear once more, Barry. And then, after one week, if no one claims the dog and proves his claim, you may have him to keep."

"I hope his owner never sees the paper," said Barry.

"That 's quite the wrong attitude to take, Barry," replied his father, "but I 'm rather hoping the same thing."

"Robert!" reproved his wife, her lips curving in that half-smile that Barry and his father loved to see.

"I 've come to the conclusion that Tricks is a pretty good sort of dog to have about," Mr. Cayliss explained.

"Oh!" choked Barry and said nothing more. Sometimes that big father of his seemed to understand just how Barry felt about things.

CHAPTER III

"I'VE COME FOR MY DOG"

THE next afternoon Barry took Tricks out for a long walk, and once he thought a short, heavy-set man with bristling mustache was following him; but the man soon disappeared, and Barry went whistling on home, forgetting all about him.

About four o'clock there came a prolonged ringing of the door-bell.

"See who 's at the door, Barry," called Mrs. Cayliss. "I can't leave the kitchen just this minute."

Barry opened the door to a dapper, rather dandified young man of swarthy complexion.

"Is Mrs. Cayliss in?" he inquired with a businesslike air.

"Yes, sir, but she 's busy just now. Will you—"

"No, I can't wait. I 've come for my dog. Mr. Cayliss sent me out for him."

"My—my father sent you out?" stammered

Barry, his heart sinking, and a dreadful sense of loneliness overpowered him.

"Yes. I 've just seen him and proved to his satisfaction that the bulldog is mine. He said I could get it by calling at the house. So, if you 'll—"

"Mother!" wailed Barry in a dismal voice.

"What is it?" answered Mrs. Cayliss, appearing in the door, removing her blue calico apron.

"He 's— He 's come for—" Barry just could not finish that sentence.

"I 've come for my dog," said the dapper young man. "Mr. Cayliss sent me out. I saw his advertisement in yesterday's 'News.' I 've been out of town or I 'd have claimed ownership of Boxer before this."

"What kind of a dog is this Boxer of yours?" questioned Mrs. Cayliss.

"A Boston bulldog," responded the youth glibly. "He 's got a streak of white hair up the middle of his head; the hair on both sides of his nose is white. His breast and both front legs are white. Back and haunches brindle. I described him to the satisfaction of Mr. Cayliss. He said for me to call here and get him."

"The description fits pretty well," observed Mrs. Cayliss, "but you might have seen the dog. Barry has had him out on the streets."

"I 've had Boxer for five years," asserted the young man, "and have taught him every trick he knows—"

"What tricks can he do?" asked Barry, a ray of hope entering his heart that there might after all be a mistake in the man's claim of ownership.

"What tricks?" the youth replied, with a slight hesitation. "Oh, all sorts of tricks. He will sit up on his hind legs and hold a pipe in his mouth as if he were smoking it. He will—ah—lie down and play dead at the word of command."

Barry groaned in spirit at the man's words, but he refused to give up hope. The man *might* be just claiming Tricks because he was a valuable trick dog, and he *might* have seen him on the street, as his mother said.

Suddenly Barry remembered the squat, bristling-mustached man, and the conviction took form in his mind that that man and this youth were trying to get Tricks away from him when they had no claim to him whatever.

He fought bravely, with every bit of his youthful intelligence and native wit trying to trip the man up.

"What command do you give when he 's playing dead and you want him to get up?" questioned Barry sharply.

"Why—what command!" sputtered the man, a shade of anger in his voice. "The command that is always used, of course. There 's only one command."

"Just what is the command?" inquired Mrs. Cayliss, and Barry was certain from the new tone in her voice that she was now suspicious of the claimant.

"What 's the use of going into all this?" questioned the youth. "I 've satisfied Mr. Cayliss that I really own the dog. You don't doubt his judgment, do you?"

"No, I don't doubt my husband's judgment, but I am beginning to doubt your words," replied Mrs. Cayliss.

The man's eyes narrowed, and his jaws set firmly.

"I am a vaudeville performer and use Boxer in my act," he continued. "I am playing in the Palace Theater in Jackson to-night, and

my train goes in half an hour. I, of course, want to satisfy any reasonable doubt you may have in the matter—"

"Then answer my boy's question. What *is* the command you give when you want him to stop playing dead?"

"It 's—it 's 'Look alive!' "

"That 's not it at all!" cried Barry. "It 's—"

"There, Barry," cautioned his mother, "we won't help this young man prove a claim that I think is false."

"I ought to know, much more than you who have had Boxer but a short time, what the command is," glowered the youth, a flush spreading over his entire face. " 'Look alive!' is the command. It is always used."

"This dog 's got a tuft of black hair on him," said Barry, the words rushing to get out of his mouth. "Where is it?"

The man seemed stumped at the question, and a feeling of elation crept over Barry. He felt that his struggle to keep Tricks was turning in his favor.

"Where is it?" repeated the man. "Why, of course—"

"There is no need for you to repeat our ques-

tions every time before you answer them," interposed Mrs. Cayliss. "It looks as though you were trying to gain time to think what to reply."

"Boxer has a tuft of black hair between his toes," the man stated, thus brought to bay.

Barry's spirits sank at that, and the man's face brightened visibly as he perceived that he had answered correctly.

"Which foot?" asked Mrs. Cayliss in a voice that had become sharp.

"The right hind foot," came the answer quickly. "Now I hope you are satisfied and will bring Boxer to me so I can catch my train."

Barry, his spirits revived by the man's mistake as to the foot, for the tuft of black hair was on Tricks's left front foot, returned emboldened to the attack.

"It 's on—another foot," he cried triumphantly. "This is not your dog at all. Call him and see if he 'll come to you. He 'd ought to know your voice if you 've had him for five years."

"Yes, that 's a good test," agreed Mrs. Cayliss. "Call him by his name—Boxer, if that 's it."

"I always called Boxer by whistling," replied the man.

"Whistle, then!" commanded Barry in a voice that had become almost gay.

The dapper youth looked at Barry askance and then began to whistle, loudly at first, then a little doubtfully.

"I think even *you* are satisfied now that this is not your dog," suggested Mrs. Cayliss, "so you 'll excuse me for not turning him over to you."

"But I 've already proved my ownership to Mr. Cayliss. He authorized me—"

"I 'll just telephone to my husband and ask what he *did* say to you. What is your name?"

"I think my name did not come into the conversation," replied the man, and Barry was sure that he was just on the point of squirming under the little dots of light that had come into his mother's eyes.

"No, I don't think it did," replied Mrs. Cayliss, "for the very good reason that you have not been near Mr. Cayliss's office. You read the ad and watched the house till you saw Barry go out with the dog and then—"

"I assure you, Mrs. Cayliss—"

"Your name is—?"

"Donovan. Philip Donovan."

"I should hardly have guessed it to be Donovan from your face. Well, Mr. Donovan, I 'll just telephone to Mr. Cayliss, and if you have n't been to see him I 'll introduce you to Policeman Duffy, who 's just coming down the street."

The youth glanced hastily around and seemed to flatten himself against the wall.

"You need n't bother to call up Mr. Cayliss," said the man. "I will go to the office and bring him out with me. Maybe then you 'll be satisfied."

"Yes, then I 'll be satisfied—if he tells me there is any shred of truth in your words."

"Expect me back in half an hour," and the man who called himself Donovan turned to go down the steps.

"Mister, you 'll miss your train for Jackson," taunted Barry in triumph. "The next train won't get you there in time for your act."

"You *do* seem to have forgotten your train," murmured Mrs. Cayliss. "I hope you do not miss it."

"You 're not through with me yet, Mrs. Cayliss," threatened the youth.

"Barry, run and tell Policeman Duffy that I want to see him."

"Yes, Mother!" cried Barry and started down the steps.

Donovan grabbed his arm and twisted it.

"Get back in the house!" he cried. "And if either of you make any kind of sign to the policeman, I 'll—"

He gave Barry a shove that landed him on the floor of the porch, and then thrust his hand into his coat pocket.

Mrs. Cayliss caught Barry up in her arms and carried him quickly into the house, shut and locked the door. Her face had gone white, and her lips were drawn into a straight, hard line.

"You watch, Barry, while I telephone your father."

Barry saw the man go quickly out into the street, walk in the opposite direction from the policeman, and turn the first corner he came to, flinging a backward glance at the house and at the officer.

CHAPTER IV

ADVENTURE WITH A NEW FRIEND

MR. CAYLISS turned the Donovan affair over to the police, and nothing more was heard of it or of Donovan. No one else appeared to claim Tricks, and Barry's fondest dream of having a dog of his own was at last fulfilled.

Tricks was his to keep! And what a dog! Daily Barry was discovering some new trick that he could perform.

He kept a careful watch over Tricks whenever they wandered to the park or out into the country, but, despite that constant watchfulness, boy and dog had many wonderful days together. Summer passed and autumn came, and Barry had forgotten Donovan and his threat. He felt secure in his possession of Tricks. His father for a time had watched the papers to see if anybody advertised for the return of a lost dog, but no one did.

One Saturday afternoon in late September Barry had gone out for a tramp with Tricks

and ended up in a tiny park in the business section of the city. There was a fountain in the center of the park with benches scattered about it under the sprinkling of trees. Several men and a dozen or more boys were sitting on the benches. Tricks lapped up some water from the fountain and returned to Barry, who was resting on a near-by bench.

"Good old Tricks," said Barry, and pulled the dog's ears. Tricks pretended he did not like it and growled.

"That 's a fine dog you 've got," remarked a youthful voice back of Barry. "But what a funny name for a dog, Trix. That 's a girl's name."

"It is n't T-r-i-x. It 's T-r-i-c-k-s," replied Barry, spelling out the names. "I called him that because he can do tricks."

"Can he?" cried the boy eagerly. "What can he do?"

Barry took a good look at his questioner. The boy was probably a year older than Barry. He wore a neat but patched pair of knee-breeches, and there were patches on the toes of his shoes. Under his arm were half a dozen copies of the "Evening News," supported by a strap that passed over his shoulder.

"Are you a newsboy?" asked Barry, instead of replying.

"Yep. I 've been sellin' papers for more 'n two years now. It must be fine to have a dog like that."

"It is," assented Barry heartily. "He 's always ready to play with you, and 'most any time he 'll perform his tricks for you."

"What can he do?" again asked the newsboy.

"He can walk on his hind legs, play dead, stand on his head—"

"Stand on his head! Will he do it now if you was to tell him to?"

"Y-yes—unless he took a notion not to."

"I 'd like to see him stand on his head. Will you do it, Tricks?"

The boy patted the dog's head. There was such admiration for Tricks on his freckled face and such a friendly look in his big gray eyes that Barry could not help liking him. Tricks seemed to like the boy, too, for he wagged his tail and looked up into the stranger's eyes for a long time. Then he went back to Barry and stood by his side.

"Maybe he 'll do it. Here, Tricks. Head down! Head down!" commanded Barry.

Tricks looked up at his master as though for

visual confirmation of the command; he circled about for a little while as though about to curl up on the ground, then lowered his head and lifted his hind feet into the air. He balanced himself on his fore feet.

"Hey! Look at the dog! He 's standin' on his head!" cried one of the boys near the fountain.

Barry looked up to find half a dozen boys running toward him. Two or three men got up from their benches and sauntered over.

"Up, Tricks!" Barry commanded and the dog resumed his normal position.

"Make him do something else"; "Gee, I bet he 's been a circus-dog"; "Must be worth a lot of money"; "Where 'd you get him?" were some of the excited comments and questions flung at Barry.

"Don't tell 'em much," cautioned the newsboy in a whisper. "Somethin' 'd be sure to get back to the dog-stealers."

"Dog-stealers!" exclaimed Barry in a loud whisper.

"Yep. Tell 'em you got to go home. I 'll walk along a piece with you."

"Come on, Tricks," commanded Barry. "Let 's go home. We 'll be late."

"What 's your hurry?" asked one of the tattered men who had strolled up.

"He 's gotta hurry," explained Barry's new friend, the newsboy, "because he 's stayed out longer 'n he told his ma he would. Come on, kid, let 's beat it."

He took Barry's arm familiarly and, with a jaunty look back over his shoulder at the little crowd of men and gaping boys, walked off, Tricks running ahead.

"Say, kid, what 's your name?"

"Barry Cayliss."

"Mine 's Jack Halloran, called 'Slip' for short."

"But why 'Slip'?" questioned Barry.

"It 's short for Slippery," replied the owner of that name with an air of pride, as they walked away from the park. "I 'm hard to hold. I can slip out of almost anybody's hands. Even the police have a hard time to hold me."

"The police!" exclaimed Barry, astounded at the extent of his new friend's experiences. "Did the police ever arrest you?"

"Naw!" replied Slip. "I got that name last Hallowe'en. A lot of us kids piled buggies an' tables an' sleighs an' things in the middle of the street. The police ketched a lot of us.

Two of 'em got their hands on me, but I slipped away from 'em. No one else did, you bet, so the fellers said I was a slippery one. Then they took to callin' me 'Slippery,' an' then just 'Slip.' "

They were a block away from the little park by this time, and they stopped as though by mutual consent.

"I 've got to sell the rest of these papers now," said Slip. "Let 's me 'n you be friends."

"All right."

"Can you meet me to-morrow afternoon by the fountain an' we 'll go out in the country an' look for hickory an' hazel nuts?"

"Yes, I guess so. Father lets me go out in the country sometimes."

"Bring Tricks with you. A dog must be lots of fun out in the woods. You just watch out, though, when you 're in town. There 's dog-stealers at work here."

"How do you know that?"

"It 's in the paper. Here, see? Here 's a story about an Airedale, a pedigreed one, stole from James Upson, the banker, last night."

He spread out a copy of the "News" and showed Barry the picture of the dog that accompanied the story.

"What 'll I do to keep Tricks from being stolen?"

"Keep him near you. Don't let him go traipsin' about by himself. Well, s' long, Barry. I gotta get busy. I 'll meet you at the fountain right after dinner to-morrow." He started off, whistling jauntily.

"So-long, Slip," called Barry. The newsboy waved to him as he turned the nearest corner, still whistling.

Barry had a new interest to absorb his thoughts as he walked briskly out to his home, Tricks keeping a few yards ahead of him. He had a new boy friend, a boy who sold papers and knew a lot of interesting things. And Slip liked Tricks and thought him a fine dog. There was no surer passport to the heart of Tricks's master. And Barry liked Slip's freckled face, his good nature, his clear-eyed honesty, and his odd, quick manner of speaking.

Barry and Tricks were waiting by the fountain in the little down-town park the following afternoon when Slip Halloran's gay whistle announced his approach. They struck off through a part of the city that was unknown to Barry. There were factories and dingy

tenement buildings and here and there an old frame house.

"There 's Ma," said Slip, pointing toward a small, weather-beaten frame house where a woman was hanging out clothes. He whistled and, when his mother looked up, waved cheerfully to her.

They soon reached the open country, and the newsboy led off at a rapid pace that betrayed his knowledge of the woods and fields.

"Winters I set traps over there by that hedge for rabbits," Slip informed his new companion.

"What do you do with them?"

"Sell 'em to the butcher mostly. Ma cooks some of 'em."

"And do you *eat* rabbits?" pursued Barry.

"Sure; they 're good. Sometimes rabbit 's the only meat we have for two or three weeks at a time."

Barry looked his surprise; that was a phase of life he had never encountered before.

"Pa 's dead," Slip explained, "and Ma 's got more 'n she can manage with four of us kids. She does washin's when she can get any to do, an' some sewin'. She used to go out an' work, but since I 've been big enough to sell papers she 's got to stay at home to look after

the baby. Ada 's 'most big enough, but Ma says she would lose her head if anything happened. How many kids in your family?"

"Just Ethel and me."

"What do you do?"

"I go to school."

"Don't you work at nothin' to make money?"

"No," confessed Barry, and was vaguely ashamed of that fact. He felt that he had fallen somewhat in Slip's estimation.

"Father 's an architect," Barry explained, "and he wants me to go to school and, when I grow up, to college."

"I guess there ain't no more schoolin' for me, since Pa died," remarked Slip. "I gotta help Ma take care of the kids. It must be nice, though, to have nothin' to do but to go to school an' play with Tricks. Where is that dog?"

Barry had forgotten Tricks and now anxiously looked about. Tricks was nowhere in sight.

"Here, Tricks, here! Here, Tricks, here!" he called again and again. Slip added his voice to Barry's.

There came a faint, short bark from beyond the hedge along which Slip set traps in the

winter-time, and soon Tricks burst through and came racing up to the boys.

"Don't you go running off, Tricks," cautioned his master. "You stay right with us, and then you won't get lost."

"You could n't *lose* him," observed Slip, "no matter if he got so far away he could n't see or smell you. He 'd run back to where he left you an' pick up your trail by scent an' follow an' find you."

"I 'm not going to take any chances," remarked Barry, and proceeded to tell his new friend of the young man who tried to get Tricks away from him.

"I 'll bet he 's one of them dog-stealers," said Slip with conviction. The newsboy seemed to have a familiarity with the seamy side of life that somewhat amazed and excited Barry, who had been brought up a home-loving boy. Not one of his other playfellows had had half the experiences of Slip, he was confident, and his liking for Slip was tinged with an admiration that none of the other boys excited in him.

They skirted several fields and farm-houses and at length came to a wooded hill overlooking a bend in the Silver River. There they found

many patches of ripening hazel-nuts, with here and there a hickory-tree. They had a swim in the river but found the water too chilly to stay in very long.

"A feller told me last fall," remarked Slip, "that there are some walnut-trees up the river a bit on the other side. Let 's cross the bridge up by Herbert's place an' see if we can find 'em."

"All right," agreed Barry. "The sun 's 'way up yet. I guess there 's plenty of time."

"Sure. We 'll get home long before sundown."

So they trudged on for a mile or more along the dusty road and then through a pasture, in which cattle were grazing, up to another wooded hill along the river. After a long and careful search they were rewarded for their trouble by finding a patch of a dozen walnut-trees so surrounded by oaks and maples that they could not be seen until one almost stumbled upon them.

"Do you 'spose they belong to any one?" asked Barry.

"No. Look at last year's crop rottin' on the ground. Hi, there! What 's that dog of yours doin'?"

Tricks was indeed behaving in an unusual manner. He was running back and forth with his nose to the ground, sniffing excitedly. All at once he gave a single bark, followed, after a silence, by a series of yelps. Then he started away at a run.

"Here, Tricks! Back!" cried Barry.

The words were hardly out of his mouth when a chorus of barkings assailed their ears, some shrill and prolonged, others deep and short.

"Back, Tricks!" commanded Barry, and Tricks came, growling, to heel.

"Gee, there must be a lot of dogs about to make such a racket," commented Slip. "I 'm going to shin up that tree an' see if I can see anything."

Barry held Tricks by the shining new collar that his father had bought, while Slip climbed up into a tall maple-tree. The uproar of barking dogs stopped, only to break out afresh in greater volume.

Slip slid rapidly down the tree.

"There are two men with a dozen dogs tied together," he retorted in rapid tone. "All kinds of dogs. They must 've heard Tricks an' tried to get away."

"We 'd better start for home," counselled Barry. "Tricks could n't fight so many dogs."

"There ain't none of 'em loose. You shin up the tree and see. I 'll hold Tricks."

Barry was as fast a climber as was Slip, and when he got up where he could look above the branches of the surrounding young oak-trees he could see nothing at first. Soon, however, he perceived a man with half a dozen dogs in leash. Then a second man followed, leading more dogs. The men were gesturing violently to some one Barry could not for the moment see.

When he did see, he blanched, for two men, armed with guns, ran past the dogs and headed for the hill where the two boys were.

"Slip!" he cried in fear, sliding down the tree. "Run! Two men with guns are coming up here! Maybe they are after Tricks!"

"All right, let 's run. Can you keep Tricks from barkin' any more?"

"I don't know. Quiet, Tricks, quiet! Come on! Run!"

Barry kept hold of Tricks's collar for a time, but as soon as he perceived that the dog thought they were playing a game with him he let go and they made much faster progress.

They darted quickly among the trees, ran through the pasture and along the road until they came to a hedge.

"Let 's climb through the hedge and rest," gasped Slip. "We 'll be out of sight then an' can watch an' see what the men do."

They slipped through the hedge and threw themselves upon the ground, Barry keeping a tight hold on Tricks's collar. Both boys were sweating profusely. Their hearts pounded away so hard they could feel the blood racing up their necks.

A few minutes later they saw two men at the edge of the woods covering the hill from which they had just fled.

"They *were* looking for us!" cried Barry.

"But why have they got so many dogs?" asked Slip. "I 'm glad we did n't wait no longer."

"Let 's start on home now," advised Barry.

"We 'd better. We can follow the hedge for a long ways an' be out of sight from the hill."

So they started out and reached town without any more excitement.

CHAPTER V

TRICKS, THE INTERLOPER

TRICKS continued to grow in favor with Barry and his father and mother, but Ethel's original dislike of him returned as he absorbed more and more of her brother's attention and affection. She became jealous of the dog, although she tried her best to hide it.

Barry was unaware of any change in his affection for his sister, or of hers for him, so wrapped up was he in the dog. Of course, he and Tricks went places where a girl could not go and did things a girl could not do. And, then, Slip Halloran absorbed much of his attention. The Cayliss family took quickly to Slip; they liked his cheerfulness, his ready smile, and his devotion to his mother and his younger brothers and sisters. It was not long until they welcomed Slip into their home and let Barry associate with him freely. And Mrs. Cayliss managed to turn a good deal of work to Mrs. Halloran and often sent her clothing that Barry and Ethel had outgrown.

Winter passed and spring came. Barry and Tricks welcomed the warm days for their promise of future jaunts together and rompings out in the open. It was a Saturday afternoon in early May. There was a chill in the air if one stood in the wind, but if sheltered and in the sunshine it was warm as toast.

Barry and Tricks prepared to go to Forest Park, and Ethel wanted to go along; she did n't like to be left at the house alone with her busy mother, with nothing to think about but what a good time her brother and Tricks were having off by themselves.

"All right, Ethel," said Barry, "but don't cry if you get left behind. I 've got to keep near Tricks."

"The idea!" exclaimed Ethel. "I don't cry if I 'm left behind. Besides, you can tie Tricks to a strap so he can't run away."

"No, I can't, Ethel. He 's got to run around. He needs the exercise."

"You don't think about anything any more but that old dog," complained Ethel crossly. "He 's all you care about."

"I guess I have to look out for Tricks so 's the dog-stealers won't get him," remonstrated Barry.

"It 's just because you 'd rather play with Tricks than with me," replied Ethel, with a hint of tears in her voice.

"No, I would n't, Ethel. But Tricks can do things and go places you can't."

"I can go any place Tricks can, I guess."

"No, you can't. You 're just a girl, and Tricks is a trick dog."

"I guess girls can do things, too. I—I almost wish—"

Ethel hesitated. The enormity of the wish which had entered her mind, seemingly full-grown, but which had really been forming there for months, refused to frame itself easily in words. She knew in her heart that if she said it Barry would be hurt and would perhaps never forgive her.

"You almost wish what, Ethel?"

Perhaps Ethel would not have uttered the thought if he had not at that moment whistled to Tricks. That whistle, showing that Barry was thinking of the dog at that very moment instead of his sister, decided Ethel.

"I almost wish you had never found Tricks!" she exploded, and looked defiantly at her brother.

"Why, why, Ethel!" cried Barry, aghast.

"What would I *do* if I 'd never found Tricks? I—I 'd *die* without him!"

Ethel was touched by the grief in her brother's voice, but his words served to convince her that he no longer cared anything for her. Tricks occupied his every thought. She shrank from inflicting further pain upon Barry, and at the same time she wanted to make him suffer.

"I hope the dog-stealers *do* get him!" she stormed in a hard little voice. She felt the grief in her heart assuaged somewhat by that wanton cruelty to Barry, but, fearful of seeing the hurt look on his face, she shut her eyes.

Barry said nothing for a time, so long that Ethel began to fear her words might have struck him dead.

"Ethel!" Barry's voice made itself heard at last, but it seemed to his sister to come from some one else, from some one very far away. There was deep anguish in it.

"I 'm sorry, Barry!" she cried in quick repentance. "I 'm a wicked girl! I don't wonder you love Tricks more than you do me."

"Ethel! I don't! You 're my sister. I *do* love you!"

Barry placed an arm affectionately about

Ethel's shoulder. He saw tears in her eyes and tried to comfort her.

"Tricks is only a dog. He 's no blood-relation to me, like you are."

"Oh, Barry. You *do* love me even if I am so hateful?"

"Yes, Ethel, I *do,*" comforted her brother.

"More than you do T-T-Tricks?"

There was a pause before Barry answered. When he spoke it was in a low voice.

"More than I do T-Tricks."

She threw her arms tightly about the neck of her adored Barry and squeezed until she almost suffocated him.

"Oh, Barry, you *darling!* Do you mean it? You do mean it, don't you, Barry?"

"Yes," replied the boy, but with inward misgiving. Did he love Ethel more than he did Tricks? He knew that he ought to, but, if Tricks were gone beyond recall, would he?

"I won't ever, ever be jealous of Tricks again," promised Ethel largely.

"Get your things on, Ethel. We 're getting a late start."

At that moment Mrs. Cayliss entered the room and found her daughter in tears and a puzzled look on her son's face.

"What 's the matter with Ethel?" she asked.

Barry swallowed hard at the lump that the sight of his sister's grief always brought up in his throat before he could reply.

"She thought that I thought more of Tricks than I do of her."

"Jealous of Tricks, my daughter?"

"Oh, mother! I was *hateful* to Barry. I said—I—I said—"

But Ethel, for the moment, could not go on with her confession.

"What was it you said, Ethel? Here, sit in my lap and tell me."

Safe in the shelter of her mother's arms, Ethel told the whole dreadful truth.

"I—I said I hoped the dog-stealers *would* get Tricks."

"Don't you think that is very unkind to Barry?"

"Yes, I do. I 'm a hateful girl. Barry *ought* to like Tricks better than he does me." Ethel abased herself and found some comfort in her contrition, for Barry's face showed plainly how very sorry he was for her.

"No, my daughter. He ought to love his sister most, as he does. But boys are not al-

ways interested in the things girls are. Barry's been a good brother to you, and you should be glad that he is happy with Tricks."

"I am," murmured Ethel in a very small voice, burying her face in her mother's neck. "Only—only—I could n't bear it if he liked Tricks the most."

"Now, don't be a goose about Tricks any more. Get your hat and go out to the park."

"Yes, Mother."

All the way to the park, Barry was very gentle with his sister. He did not whistle for Tricks to come to heel unless the dog got very far ahead, and then he fidgeted and squirmed until Ethel would call, "Here, Tricks, here!" The dog paid no more attention than to look briefly around. But the moment Barry whistled Tricks would come running back.

"He does n't pay any more attention to me than if I was n't here," complained Ethel. She found herself experiencing again that vague disquiet which thought of the dog had of late months aroused in her. She believed she had overcome that secret hostility to Tricks when Barry had been so nice to her, but found that it persisted, and she was troubled.

Barry perceived vaguely that his sister was distressed about the dog, and he tried to find excuse for his pet.

"Tricks knows he 's my dog," he explained lamely. "If he was yours he probably would n't pay any attention to me when I called him."

"I 'm glad he is n't mine," interposed Ethel. "I would n't have him, not if you were to give him to me."

Barry felt a sudden dull anger at his sister flame through him. It was not the first time since the coming of Tricks that he had been exasperated with Ethel, but the feeling lasted longer this time. He tried to suppress it, but words finally burst from his lips.

"You need n't worry," he retorted shortly. "I would n't give him to you, not for anything in the world."

"I would n't have him for anything in the world, either."

Ethel's nose was lifted a little higher in the air. Each was aggrieved at the other, and yet each was secretly ashamed of the feeling of hostility that had been aroused. Barry was on the point of expressing his repentance when Tricks began barking furiously. Barry darted

ahead to see that he did not get into a fight with another dog, and when Ethel caught up with them he had forgotten his irritation and so did not tell her he was sorry.

CHAPTER VI

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF TRICKS

ETHEL sat on a park bench for half an hour and looked at the pictures in a new book. Barry and Tricks chased each other until the boy was tired and dropped on the ground near the bench. Tricks, panting and with gleaming eyes that watched his master's intently, flopped down beside him.

"I can't see what fun you find in running after Tricks, or running away from him, all the time," observed Ethel.

"It would n't be fun for you, Ethel."

A silence fell between them, which neither knew just how to break and yet which each felt should be broken.

As Barry turned over on his side, a gray squirrel came down the trunk of a maple-tree and scampered several feet toward him. It then sat up on its haunches and began to scold volubly. The dog gave the interloper one impatient glance and then fixed his eyes upon Barry again.

The boy fished a peanut from his blouse pocket and threw it toward the chatterer. It fell short, and the squirrel hesitated to approach to get the dainty. Fear of the dog was written in every nervous twitch of its body; but the desire for the delicacy finally overcame its fear, and it made a dash for the peanut, seized it, and darted straight on past them, not more than three feet from Tricks's nose.

With a yelp, Tricks started in pursuit. The squirrel, instead of running up another tree, kept straight ahead. In a moment it had disappeared from sight around a clump of shrubbery. Tricks tore through the brush, uttering an occasional short yelp.

The squirrel seemed to be leading the dog a deliberate chase, for the sound of barking grew fainter in the distance.

"Here, Tricks, here!" called Barry. "Here, Tricks, here!"

"Oh, let him alone, can't you?" cried Ethel perversely. "He 'll come back."

Barry slumped down flat on his back on the ground, and waited for Tricks to return. He heard a fainter barking, and then everything was silent.

The silence persisted. Barry could hear the

feet of another squirrel pattering on a patch of dry leaves under the shrubbery.

Then, to Barry, the silence was shattered by a howl of pain from Tricks. He sprang up, his heart pounding wildly. The yelp was repeated once and cut short off.

"Here, Tricks, here!" called Barry, and began to run as fast as he could go in the direction in which Tricks had disappeared.

"Wait for me, Barry!" cried Ethel, but Barry did not hear her or, hearing, paid no attention. He kept on running and was gone from her sight before she had reached the cross-path fifty feet away.

She heard Barry's voice calling the dog, and the fear in it clutched her own heart. She followed as fast as she could.

Barry forgot everything in his anxiety about Tricks. He kept calling him, at times stopping to listen. But the surging blood beat so loudly in his ears that he doubted if he could hear the dog even if he should bark. He skirted the little pond in which children were sailing toy boats. He knew one of the boys and accosted him.

"Dick, have you seen my dog, Tricks, go

along here?" he gasped, coming to a sudden halt.

Dick Ross dropped his boat, calling to a companion to watch it, and joined Barry.

"No, I have n't seen Tricks. Is he lost? How 'd you lose him?"

"He was running after a squirrel. And after a long time I heard him yelp, as though he 'd been hurt."

"I 'll help you hunt. Which way did he go?"

"I was near the north gate, and he started to cross the park."

"The squirrel may have doubled back on his tracks."

Barry started back into the park, turning to fling a "Come on, Dick," over his shoulder. Dick was a year the younger, but Barry was nearly winded, and his friend soon caught up with him.

They ran on together for some distance, alternately calling for Tricks.

At the pergola, Dick suggested that they take divergent paths and meet at the fountain. Without a word, Barry branched off through the trees that crowned the little hill north of the children's playground. Dick took the

path to the south. For a time Barry could hear his friend's voice calling, and then it died away in the distance.

Two or three times he stopped to ask passers-by, breathlessly, if they had seen a Boston bull-dog chasing a squirrel, but no one had. Soon he was so tired that he had to slow down to a trot, and the realization came to him more strongly that Tricks was either lost or stolen. He sobbed with the anguish of that moment, and his wearied legs almost gave way under him. How was he going to face the future without Tricks?

He called again and again, but there was a catch in his voice, and Tricks would have had to be very close indeed to hear that summons. Once he heard Ethel's voice calling for Tricks. If Ethel had not scoffed at him for starting to follow Tricks when he raced after the squirrel, his dog would not be lost. Resentment at his sister burned dully in his heart.

He began to run again, but his feet seemed of lead. Five minutes later he arrived at the fountain and fell exhausted on the stone bench upon which Dick Ross awaited him.

"Did you—see him?" he panted.

"No," replied Dick. "I asked several kids

if they 'd seen a dog, but none of them had. What 're you going to do now?"

"I—don't—know."

"I 'spose he 's lost—or maybe gone on home."

"Tricks would n't—go on home—alone—and leave me—here."

"Maybe some one kicked him. That 'd make him run for home."

At that moment a large touring automobile, with a dark-green body, whirled rapidly around the semicircular drive about the fountain. There was something vaguely familiar to Barry in the face of the young man in the rear seat. He turned to get a better look, but the man leaned over as though holding something in the tonneau of the car. A moment later the automobile had disappeared around a curve in the road.

"I 'd go home if I was you and see if he 's there," pursued Dick. "If he was in the park he 'd have heard one of us calling him."

Barry was too dazed by the fact, which he now firmly believed, that Tricks was lost, to reply. He sat on the stone bench staring straight ahead. He was still breathing loudly, and his heart pounded suffocatingly. The roof of his mouth felt dry and constricted as though

some one were choking him. His eyes smarted with tears that wanted to come but which he was just able to restrain.

Dick was at loss how to comfort Barry, and shifted uneasily on the bench.

"I left my boat at the lake," he murmured finally. "Guess I'd better go and get it. Come along, Barry."

"No. I've got to look for Tricks some more and then find Ethel."

His companion did not like to leave him alone and at the same time felt that Barry wanted to be alone. He got up quietly and tiptoed a few steps away without knowing why he should walk on his toes. In fact, he was not even aware that he had done so.

"I'm sorry—about Tricks." He waited a moment for Barry to speak, but as his friend continued to stare straight ahead, unheeding, Dick walked reluctantly away, flinging an occasional backward glance over his shoulder.

Barry's benumbed brain was aware that he was alone, though not conscious of the moment Dick had left him.

Tricks was gone. Tricks was gone. That thought kept hammering away at his brain.

He did not want to go home. *He did not want to live.*

But after a time remembrance of Ethel, whom he had left alone on the bench, came to him. Perhaps she was waiting there for him. No; he dimly remembered having heard her calling Tricks while he was running across the little wooded hill. Ethel had not gone home. He must find her. What would his parents say if he went home without his sister? She could find her way home alone, he knew, but still he had always been charged with the duty of watching out for her, and the habit persisted.

Slowly he got up and started back to the bench where he had left his sister. He kept a lookout for Tricks, but he did not have the heart to call him any more. Perhaps Tricks had returned and was with Ethel waiting for him to come back.

He hastened his steps, his heart lighter, and beating faster. He was almost there. Another turn and he could see the bench.

If Tricks were not there? If he were lost for good and all? His heart took to thumping against his ribs again as though it wanted to spring out from his body. It required all his boyish courage to make himself go on, but,

taking a long breath, he trudged slowly forward. He turned the corner.

He stopped breathing for a moment, and his heart seemed to stand still.

The bench was empty. Not even Ethel was there.

CHAPTER VII

GIGANTIC POLICEMAN McCAR-R-RTY

WITH sinking heart, Barry went on to the bench. Ethel was probably looking for him as he had been looking for Tricks. He wondered if she might be feeling as badly about not finding him as he was about not finding Tricks.

That thought started him retracing his steps in a hunt, not for the lost dog, but for Ethel. In his mind he had definitely come to the conclusion that Tricks was lost—or possibly had been stolen.

He wanted to see Slip Halloran. Slip would know what to do. But first he must find Ethel. He cried her name occasionally, but not as loudly as he had Tricks's, for now he was aware that the persons he passed stared at him when he shouted. In his search for Tricks he had been too absorbed to notice the people.

He shouted at rarer intervals but quickened his pace. Ethel, he knew, could find her way

home alone. She did not easily lose her head, and could ask a policeman to direct her.

When Barry came within sight of the little lake where the children were sailing their boats, he turned back. He cut through the park, avoiding the pathways, and at length found Ethel on the little bridge that crossed the stream which fed the lake.

She was with a big policeman—so big that he seemed to Barry almost to be a giant. Ethel was crying, and the policeman was trying to comfort her.

"There now, little miss, if you ain't lost, what are you crying for? I 'll see that you get home."

"It 's—it 's not that," sobbed Ethel.

"It 's our dog, Tricks, that 's lost," explained Barry, running up to them.

"Oh, it 's a lost dog, is it? Well, now I 'd say that *is* something to be crying for. Who might you be?"

"He 's my brother," Ethel sobbed, and threw her arms convulsively about Barry's neck. The boy felt uncomfortable at having her make such a fuss over him before the policeman.

"It 's all right, Ethel. Stop crying."

"D-d-did you—did you f-f-find—?" Ethel

did not finish the question, but hid her face on Barry's arm and shoulder.

"No," replied Barry in a weak voice. "He 's lost for good, I guess."

Ethel shuddered at his words, and Barry was at once concerned. His sister was more upset than he had imagined she would be over the loss of his dog. Tricks meant more to her than her hasty words earlier in the day had indicated.

"The dog 'll be found. You 'll see," comforted the policeman.

Barry grasped his sister's hand and held it tight. It was hot to his touch and trembled.

"I 'm not mad at you, Ethel," he said. "I don't blame you."

"And why should you be blamin' her?" asked the policeman. "How would she lose the dog?"

"He followed a squirrel," Barry began, but was interrupted by Ethel.

"I would n't l-l-let him r-r-run after Tricks."

"Well, now, a dog can't be lost so easy as all that. He 'll turn up. If he ain't here in the park he 's probably at home waitin' for you."

"He *is* lost," Barry asserted. "He would

have come when I called him if he was n't lost or stolen."

"Who 'd want to steal your dog now?"

"The dog-stealers."

"Ho! The dog-stealers, is it? And why do you think they 'd be after pickin' up your dog Trix. She 's only a—"

"His name is n't T-r-i-x," corrected Barry. "It 's T-r-i-c-k-s because he 's a trick dog."

"I beg his pardon, I 'm sure. Tricks seems to be more of a dog than I thought."

"He can stand on his head and get your cane and slippers." Barry began to enumerate some of his pet's accomplishments.

"And—and he can p-p-play dead," added Ethel, "and turn somersaults."

"And you taught him all them tricks?" questioned the policeman in astonishment.

"I did n't teach him any of them," replied Barry. "We found him last year—here in the park—and he played dead and would n't get up until we found the right command to give—"

"He would have stayed there and died of s-s-starvation," Ethel interrupted.

"Whew!" whistled the policeman. "So that 's the sort of a dog he was."

"He 's a Boston bulldog," Barry announced. "Father said he 's probably worth two hundred dollars—"

"What? . . . What 's that, you say? Worth two hundred dollars!"

"Father thinks he 's been a circus-dog."

"A p-p-pedigreed one," Ethel sobbed. "Not a p-p-pedigreed circus, I don't mean. I m-m-m—"

"I know what you mean, little girl. What 's your father's name?"

"Robert Cayliss," answered Barry.

"Is n't he that architect fellow, with offices in the Brinton Buildin'?"

"Yes, sir. Do you know my father?"

"I know of him. Did n't he report to the police last summer that a man had gone to his house claimin' a dog that he advertised as being found? And did n't the man threaten your mother?"

"Yes, he did, Mr. Policeman, and Tricks is that dog."

"Have you ever seen anything of that man since?"

"No, sir."

"Well, you children 'd better go home and

see if the dog is there. If not, I 'd advise you to advertise for him. Offer a reward for his return and say no questions asked."

"Advertise for him in the 'News.' "

"Yes. Or the 'Herald.' And be sure to say, 'No questions asked'; that is, if you want to get the dog back in a hurry."

"I *do!*" cried Barry eagerly. "But what does that mean, 'No questions asked'?"

"It means that maybe somebody stole the dog for the reward. And if he don't get it he might sell the dog—in Chicago, maybe, or even in New York. Them dog-stealers have branches all over the country."

"I won 't ask any questions, if only they 'll bring Tricks back," declared Barry. "Do you think they *will* bring him back?"

"I would n't be a bit surprised if the reward would turn the trick. Do you know Policeman Sheehan at the corner of Benson Avenue and Fifty-eighth Street?"

"No. I 've seen him, I guess, but I don't know him."

"Well, you go to the corner and tell him Policeman McCar-r-rty—that 's me—sent you. You ask him if he 's seen anybody come out of the park with a bulldog."

"Thank you, Mr. McCar-r-rty, I will."

"You got that name pretty well for not bein' Irish," laughed the officer. "You just tell Sheehan I said for him to keep his weather-eye peeled for a bulldog that can do tricks. Say it belongs to you and you 're a very special friend of mine."

"*Will* you let me be a very special friend of yours?" exclaimed Barry, with a new light in his eyes. Here was a chance to get Tricks back if he was a friend of a policeman's!

"Surest thing you know, Barry. I 'll pass the word around among the policemen stationed in the park that your dog 's lost. But don't forget to advertise a reward for his return."

"I won't," Barry promised, and held out his hand to the big policeman. "Thank you for—for going to help me find Tricks."

"Don't mention it. Let me know if there 's anything else I can do. You might give me as good a description of the dog as you can, and I 'll turn in a report at headquarters."

"He 's got a white streak down the middle of his forehead, and his breast and front legs are white. And there 's a tuft of black hair between the toes of his left front foot."

Officer McCar-r-rty wrote that all down in

his little book, making Barry feel very grown-up and important. In fact, he forgot for the time being a little of his grief at the loss of Tricks in that new feeling of importance.

"And what 's his main color?" questioned the policeman. "Brindle, I suppose?"

"Yes, brindle, and his eyes are big and soft and brown, and his ears have been trimmed to points, and he can stand on his head—"

"Right," said McCar-r-rty, closing his little red book, "I 've got it all written down. Feelin' better, little girl?"

Ethel, thus appealed to, tried to smile up into the officer's eyes, but her lips twisted piteously as she murmured, "Yes, thank you."

"That 's right. If I was you, Barry, I 'd get my sister home as soon as I could. Her nerves seem to have had quite a shock. But don't forget to see Sheehan."

"I 'll take her right home as soon as I 've seen Mr. Sheehan," Barry promised, and, clutching still tighter the hand of his sister, which he had held throughout his conversation with the big policeman, he set out for the east gate.

Ethel, who had regained a part of her composure while Barry was talking with

McCar-r-rty, began to lose it as soon as they had turned their backs on the friendly officer. She grasped Barry's fingers in a convulsive grip, and her tears began to flow again.

"Oh, Barry, do you hate me?"

"No, Ethel."

"If I was you I 'd hate me."

"I don't, Ethel. It was n't your fault Tricks ran off. It was the squirrel."

"But I called you back when you started—"

"I guess I could have run after him if I 'd really wanted to," interrupted Barry. "I was sort of tired and did n't want to chase him any more."

"Then you don't really blame *me,* Barry?"

"Of course not."

"And you won't if Tricks nev—if he never comes back?"

"If he never— What do you mean?"

Barry stopped to look at his sister, but she kept her eyes averted from him.

"Whoever—f-f-finds Tricks might keep him, the same as we did. Would you blame me for that?"

"Why, Ethel, why should I blame you for anything *they* did? It would n't be anything *you* did."

"I just wanted to know—for sure. Because I did n't mean it when I said—"

"There," interrupted her brother, "I guess your nerves are upset, like Mr. McCar-r-rty said. I know you did n't mean what you said about wishing the dog-stealers would get Tricks."

Ethel squeezed his hand still harder. Her voice was very small when she spoke.

"Oh, but I did mean it, Barry! It 's wicked of me, but I did mean it. I—I hated Tricks—"

"Why, why, *Ethel!* Hated Tricks?"

"Yes, I did."

"But why? What 'd Tricks ever done to you?"

"He 's taken you away from me. You never play with me any more the way you used to before you found Tricks. . . . I wish you 'd beat me up."

"Ethel! Beat you up?"

"Yes, I think it would make me feel better if you would."

"Well, I 'm not going to, so come on. Policeman Sheehan may be gone if we don't hurry."

They were approaching the east gate of the park when Ethel stopped her brother.

"Barry, is it a—a lie if you don't tell everything you know? About—about something that nobody 's asked you about?"

"Whatever do you mean? I can't make any sense out of that."

"If a girl, or a woman, or just any person, knew something some other person did n't, and did n't say anything about it—would that be a lie, if they had n't asked her about it?"

"I don't know what you mean, Ethel. Here, let 's run. There 's Policeman Sheehan!"

Barry did not trouble himself any more to understand his sister's scruples or what might lurk back of them. He was thinking only of Tricks and of enlisting McCar-r-rty's policeman friend's aid in the search for him. He ran quickly across the street in front of an oncoming automobile, pulling Ethel after him.

"That 's a good way to get killed," commented the policeman who dragged them both from the street to the island of safety from which he regulated the street traffic. "I 've seen more 'n one boy get killed just from runnin' across the traffic like that."

"Are you Policeman Sheehan?" asked Barry breathlessly.

"Sure and that 's me name, and I 'd tell it

to the King of England if he was to ask me."

Barry hurried into breathless speech.

"Policeman McCar-r-rty said for me to stop and tell you my dog, Tricks, is lost and to ask you if you 'd seen anybody bring a dog that might be him out of the park. He said to tell you I was a special friend of his—"

"Oh, so you 're a special friend of McCar-r-rty's, are you?" interrupted Officer Sheehan, a changed look coming over his face.

"Yes, sir. That 's what he said for me to tell you."

"Well, that 's enough for me, young feller. Any special friend of McCar-r-rty's is a very special friend of mine. I have n't the pleasure of knowin' your name, but any boy as has lost the dog of his heart has come to the right party when he comes to Sheehan—to Sheehan or to McCar-r-rty."

"We hunted all over the park for Tricks—it 's T-r-i-c-k-s because he can perform many kinds of tricks, not T-r-i-x—but he was gone. Mr. McCar-r-rty thought maybe you might have seen a Boston bulldog like him—"

"I 'm afraid I have n't seen any Boston bulldog to-day. Try an ad in the 'lost and found'

columns of the 'News.' They bring results, you know."

Sheehan gave the boy a very large and a very mystifying wink as he spoke.

"That 's what McCar-r-rty said," observed Barry.

"Is it, now? Well, McCar-r-rty knows a thing or two. And, by St. Patrick, so do I. You just try an ad in the 'News.' If you was to offer a reward for his return, now—"

"That 's what McCar-r-rty said," Barry interrupted. "A reward with no questions asked."

"McCar-r-rty has taken the words right out of my mouth," remarked Officer Sheehan. "You put the ad in the paper, and if anybody brings the dog to you, you pay the reward and don't stop to ask where he found the dog, or why or anything else."

"No, sir, I won't," Barry promised.

Sheehan took out a little red book and a lead-pencil.

"What is your name, my boy? I 'll just make out a little report of the loss of your dog, Tricks—not T-r-i-x."

"My name 's Barry Cayliss, and my father 's

Robert Cayliss," answered Barry. "But Mr. McCar-r-rty put all that down."

"Of course, he did. McCar-r-rty 's a smart man."

Policeman Sheehan closed his red book with a snap and returned it to an inside pocket.

"Well, that 's all right now, so off you go. I 'm glad to have met you, and I 'll keep my weather-eye peeled for Tricks. *I* had a dog once in the old country—"

But Officer Sheehan had put the children across the street during a lull in traffic and was back at his post again.

Ethel was very quiet all the way home. She did not weep any more, and when she was spoken to she replied in the fewest possible words. The house was locked when they reached home, but Barry knew where the key was kept and soon had the back door open.

"Mother must have gone to the store," said Ethel. "What are you going to tell her?"

There was a look of apprehension in Ethel's eyes that touched Barry's heart.

"I 'm going to tell her Tricks got lost chasing a squirrel," he replied.

"You won't say anything about me—about

the way I talked about Tricks after we left the house?"

"No."

"Thank you, Barry. I 'm going up-stairs."

She ran up-stairs, and soon everything was quiet in the house. The quietness brought back Barry's grief all the more intensely. He did not know what to do with himself and fidgeted about, standing at the window for a while to see if Tricks might be coming up the walk to the house, then flinging himself disconsolately down in a chair. He looked at the clock. It was only three! It would be several hours yet before his father got home. It would be too late then, he thought, to get the advertisement in the "News" for the next day.

He wondered how much it cost to put in an ad. He 'd saved up an awful lot of money, perhaps four or five dollars. If he broke open his bank, he might get the ad in to-morrow's "News."

He got his bank, went out into the garage, and there with sledge and chisel forced it open. He had just finished counting the coins, $5.83 in all, when a shadow fell across the broken bank. He looked up. There stood Ethel, very tense and pale.

"Here, Barry. This will help."

"What is it, Ethel?"

"My money. I opened my bank. It 's only two dollars and thirty-five cents, but I want you to use it for the reward."

"I guess I 'll need it. I 've got five eighty-three. Together we 've got—why, it 's over eight dollars! Do you suppose it 's enough?"

"It 's all we 've got."

"That 's so; and I 've got to hurry to get it to the paper so 's it will be in to-morrow's 'News.' "

"Shall I come with you, Barry?"

"No, you stay here and tell Mother where I 've gone. I want to find Slip and get him to help me make up the ad and get it in. He knows what to do."

"All right, Barry. I—I hope you get Tricks back. I don't want you to, but I hope you do just the same," and, with that puzzling and contradictory statement, Ethel ran quickly into the house.

CHAPTER VIII

"LOST, MY DOG, TRICKS"

SLIP HALLORAN proved most elusive that afternoon, and Barry wasted half an hour of precious time before finding him in front of the "News" office waiting for the next edition to be run off the presses.

"Hello, Barry, going to get some papers to sell?"

"Hello, Slip. Tricks is lost and I want to put an ad in the—"

"How 'd you lose him?" Slip was much concerned, and already Barry felt somewhat comforted. He explained briefly how the dog had disappeared and told what Policeman McCar-r-rty had advised him to do.

"But I don't know just how to write an ad and get it in the paper. Will you help me?"

"Sure. Come on in the office. We 'll get a blank an' fill it in."

They entered the dingy newspaper business office, and Slip got a bit of yellow paper ruled

off with broken lines and told Barry that one word was to be written over each section of the broken line. "What do you want to say?"

"I thought: 'Lost or stolen, my dog, Tricks. Reward for his return and no questions asked.' McCar-r-rty said that was most important to say—'No questions asked.' "

"Yes, we 've got to put that in, but I don't know about sayin' 'or stolen.' If anybody had stolen him, it might scare him away. Better just let on you think he was lost."

"All right, cross out 'or stolen.' "

Slip took the pencil and wrote rapidly for a moment, stopped and scratched his ear with the pencil-point, making a smudge on it, then continued writing. When it was done, he read the result to Barry:

" 'Lost, my dog, Tricks. Reward and no questions asked for his return to Barry Cayliss, 244 East Walnut Street.' "

"Should n't we say how big a reward is offered?" suggested Barry.

"Of course. How much are you going to offer?"

"Ethel and I 've got eight dollars and eighteen cents altogether."

"That 's a pretty small reward for a trick

dog. Besides, you 'll have to pay for the ad."

"How much will that be?"

"It 'll depend on how many words there are. It costs four cents a word."

"That 's an awful lot," objected Barry.

"I know, but you 've got to pay it if you want the ad printed." Slip considered a moment. "We 'll leave the amount of the reward blank until we find out how much it 's going to cost."

"Could part of the reward be in work?" asked Barry.

"How do you mean, in work?"

"Could n't we offer all that 's left after paying for the ad, and five or maybe ten dollars more? I 'd do chores for whoever returned Tricks to make up for what I did n't have in money."

"Maybe that 'll work," responded Slip. "If some man found the dog he might like to have you mow the lawn or something to make up the difference."

"That 's what I meant. We could say fifteen dollars for the return of the dog and no questions asked—so much in cash and the rest in mowing your lawn, taking care of your horse or something like that."

"That 's good," agreed Slip. "Here, I 'll write it out again."

He took a fresh advertisement blank and wrote slowly and painstakingly. At the end of five minutes he read what he had written.

" 'Lost, my dog, Tricks, who can stand on his head, carry your slippers, play dead, and many other tricks, in Forest Park this afternoon. Reward of $— and no questions asked for his return to Barry Cayliss, 244 East Walnut Street. $— of the reward in cash, the rest in mowing your lawn, caring for your horses or in running errands.' "

"That seems all right," observed Barry critically.

Slip held the paper off dubiously and read it again.

"It 's going to cost a lot to get it printed. It 's longer than most lost ads. I think we 'd better try to cut it down so there 'll be more money for the reward."

"I guess you 're right, Slip, but what *can* we cut out? Not 'and no questions asked.' "

"No, 'an' no question asked' has got to stay in if nothin' else does. I don't really see what we can leave out. Do you?"

Barry responded with another question:

"You have n't said what kind of a dog Tricks is, have you?"

"Shucks, no! I forgot that!" exclaimed Slip in self-disgust. "The most important thing, almost, an' I left it out. I 'll write it in. What shall we say?"

"He 's a pedigreed Boston bulldog—"

"I would n't say pedigreed," interrupted Slip. "Whoever found him might not want to return him for ten or fifteen dollars if he knew he was worth fifty or a hundred. Besides, you don't know for sure that he is a pedigreed dog."

"Well, write just 'Boston bulldog,' then; 'white streak down his forehead; body brindle; nose, breast, and front legs white and a tuft of black hair on one foot.' "

"I 've got that all down," said Slip, after writing laboriously over the paper for several minutes, "but it ain't shorter. We 've made it longer."

Barry sighed. "I don't know what we can leave out."

"We can call him a trick dog and not tell what any of the tricks he does are."

"Yes, but there may be other Boston bulldogs that can do tricks."

"I guess two would hardly get lost on the

same day, specially if they both had black hair between their toes."

"All right, let 's leave out the tricks he can do."

Slip crossed out the words it had been decided to sacrifice. He counted them.

"That 's sixty cents saved for whoever returns Tricks. If we can cut out that many more it 'll be more 'n a dollar to the good."

He studied the remaining words of the advertisement carefully, and so did Barry, looking over his shoulder. They sighed in unison.

"I don't see anything more we can leave out," said Barry.

"Nor I," responded Slip.

They puzzled over the shortening of the advertisement for a few minutes longer and then gave it up. They stood at the desk, gloomy and frowning, facing each other. Slip was looking toward the door leading from the street into the office, and Barry saw his face suddenly brighten.

"There 's Mr. Northway. He 'll help us. Oh, Mr. Northway!"

Barry turned and saw a medium-sized young man in a gray soft felt hat and a light-gray suit approaching them. The brim of his hat

was turned down so that Barry could hardly see his eyes, but he smiled at Slip as he approached them and laid a friendly hand on the newsboy's shoulder.

"Well, Slip, I have n't seen you for several days. Been busy selling the papers with my stories in 'em, have you?"

"Yes, Mr. Northway," responded Slip eagerly, "and I 've got a new job forenoons in Johnson's drug-store."

"Glad to hear it. I know Johnson, and I 'll tell him you 're the kind of boy he needs."

"Will you? Mother 'll be awful glad. An' so will I, too, Mr. Northway."

"What 's this? A 'lost' ad? What have you lost?"

"This is my friend, Barry Cayliss. He 's lost his trick dog, an' we 're tryin' to write an ad offerin' a reward and no questions asked for his return. It 's gettin' so long there won't be much left for the reward. He 'll have to take it almost all out in runnin' errands."

"What 's that? Pay the reward by running errands for the person who returns the dog? There 's a good human-interest story in that."

"Please will you help us cut it down?" asked Barry.

"If I can. Let me have a look at it. My name 's Northway, Paul Northway. Slip forgot to mention it. I 'm a reporter on the 'News.' " He read rapidly through the scrawled "lost" advertisement.

"I say," he cried. "That 's fine; that 's bully. It 's got the human touch in it. You put that ad in the paper, and I 'll get you a two-column news-story that everybody in town will read. Got a picture of Tricks?"

"No, sir."

"That 's too bad. I wish you had. However, you come up with me and have your picture taken. I 'll use that with the story."

"My picture in the paper!" exclaimed Barry. "Why, why—what will Father say?"

"I don't know what he 'll say, but he 'll be tickled to death. Besides, it will help you get your dog back."

"Gee, Barry, that 'll be great," exulted Slip. "Ten or maybe a hundred times as many people 'll read the story as would read the ad."

"Yes, and many of them will be on the lookout for your dog," stated the reporter. "There 've been so many valuable pets lost or stolen recently that dog-owners are all stirred up about it. I 'd put back in your advertise-

ment the tricks the dog can do. I 'd make the reward twenty-five dollars. Pay what you can in cash and the rest in work. The twenty-five dollars sounds bigger and will impress readers more."

"Then we had the ad about right in the first place," said Barry.

"It 's a very good ad," replied the reporter. "It means something. It 's got color and human interest in it. I had a dog once, and I know how you feel, and that 's what we want to make the readers understand—just how you feel."

"Was it a Boston bulldog, too?" asked Barry.

"My dog? No, it was a collie. I was ten years old when he got killed."

"Killed?" echoed Barry, in a shocked voice, a picture of Mr. Northway's grief at the death of his dog filling his mind. That was much worse than having your dog lost or stolen, because if he was not dead there was *some* chance of his being returned.

"Yes, he got run over by a street-car."

"I—I 'm sorry," said Barry, and felt that he wanted to say more but did not know just how to word it.

Northway looked kindly down at him.

"I understand, Barry Cayliss. You're sorry for the little boy whose dog was killed instead of just lost. You've got imagination and sympathy. I hope I have, too—enough to help you get your dog back."

Barry thrilled at the reporter's words. To be the friend of a man who wrote stories for the newspaper and have him help find Tricks was good fortune, indeed—more than he could ever have hoped for or expected.

"You *have!*" stated Barry with conviction, looking up at his new friend.

"Thank you, Barry. A reporter doesn't always arouse such faith. Now we'll turn your ad in and find out just how much cash we can offer. Then we'll have you photographed. I'll see the police and report the loss of another dog to them—"

"The police know about it," interrupted Barry. "Policeman McCar-r-rty put it all down in a little red book and said he would report it at headquarters."

"He did, eh? Well, that's good. I know McCar-r-rty. I'll just speak to the chief about it anyway. If they hear of the loss of Tricks from several sources it'll help keep them stirred up."

The reporter led the way to the classified advertisements window.

"Here, Wilson, I want you to give this ad as good a showing in to-morrow's paper as possible. I 'm going to play it up for a human-interest story in the news columns."

"All right, Paul. I 'll give it top place."

"How much is it going to cost?"

The man behind the grated window counted the words.

"Two dollars and eight cents," he said. "It 's rather long. Perhaps we might cut it down—"

"No, I don't want it cut down. It 's just the way Barry and Slip wrote it, and it gives me just the angle I want. How much money have you got, Barry? Can you pay for one insertion of the ad?"

"I 've got eight dollars and eighteen cents."

"You 're rich," laughed Northway. "Where did you get the money?"

"I broke open my bank, and Ethel broke open hers."

"Who 's Ethel? Your sister?"

"Yes."

"This gets better and better," remarked Northway. "You pay for the ad and come

with me. You can tell me more about how Tricks got lost while you're being photographed."

Barry paid Wilson for the advertisement, counting out the dimes and nickels and pennies until the $2.08 was complete.

"That leaves six dollars and ten cents as the money part of the reward," said Northway. "Fill it in, will you, Wilson?"

Northway led Barry, with Slip following, up-stairs to the engraving department. There a fat young man took two pictures of Barry and then took up his camera to leave.

"Don't you want a picture of Slip, too?" Barry asked the reporter. "He helped me write the ad. And he's going to help me find Tricks, aren't you, Slip?"

"Sure, I am."

"I don't know whether I can use one of Slip or not, probably not," responded Northway, "but you might take one of the boys together, Scotty. There's just a chance Sells might use it."

So Barry and Slip, with their heads together, bending over a bit of paper on which they pretended to be writing the advertisement, were photographed together.

And then Barry and Northway had a long talk, after Slip had gone out with a lot of copies of the latest edition of the "News" to sell. He told the reporter all about finding Tricks and the search for the right word of command to make him get up after playing dead; how his father had advertised the dog in the "found" column of the "News," but no one had claimed him except the dark youth who had called at the house, stating that Mr. Cayliss had sent him.

"That man 's undoubtedly one of the band of dog-stealers who have been working this town of late," stated Northway. "If you ever see him again, follow him, if you get a chance, and let me know where he goes. He might know something about Tricks. It would be a big story for the 'News' if we should run down the dog-stealers."

"Shadow him, like a detective?" asked Barry.

"That 's the dope. Do you think you could do it?"

"I could try."

"He 'll probably make himself scarce for a while if he had anything to do with the disappearance of your dog, but if he ever does show up, follow him if you can. If you can't,

see who he 's with and describe him to me. Will you?"

"Yes, Mr. Northway, I will."

"All right. Now be off for home, or your folks will be worrying about you. I may be out to see you to-morrow. And Ethel. I 'd like to have a talk with Ethel."

"She could n't tell you very much. And her nerves are awful upset. Mr. McCar-r-rty said so."

"She might give me a lead. Oh, by the way, I know your father—"

"You know my father!" exclaimed Barry.

"Yes. Tell him the 'News' reporter that wrote up his plans for the new school-house is writing a story about the loss of Tricks. He 'll remember me then even if he has forgotten my name."

Barry ran most of the way home, thinking about this remarkable reporter who knew McCar-r-rty, the chief of police, his father, and maybe the mayor and ever so many more personages. He felt greatly relieved about the return of Tricks since his talk with Northway; it seemed to him that only a few days separated him from a joyful reunion with his playfellow.

He burst into the house just a few minutes after Mr. Cayliss returned, and found Ethel stammering out the loss of Tricks in the park. Ethel was behaving very curiously, he thought; she must not have hated Tricks as much as she let on. Her eyes were red as though she had been crying, and her voice was unusually low and gentle.

"So Tricks is lost?" observed Mr. Cayliss as Barry rushed in. "I 'm mighty sorry. I shall miss him, too—almost as much as you will, I do believe. Ethel said you took your money and hers to advertise in the 'News.' That was a good thing to do, but I wish you had come to me. I 'd have offered a reward and helped you write—"

"We have offered a reward!" interrupted Barry breathlessly. "And Mr. Northway, the reporter who wrote something for the paper about your school-house plans—he said you 'd remember him even if you 'd forgotten his name—is going to write a story about Tricks getting lost and put it in the paper."

"I 'd have offered a reward of fifty dollars for that dog," observed Mr. Cayliss. "Five dollars must have been about all the money

you had left after paying for the ad. That would n't tempt a man who was holding the dog for a reward."

"We offered twenty-five dollars, and no questions asked," explained Barry.

"Twenty-five dollars!" exclaimed his father. "Where did you find so much money as all that?"

"Only six dollars and ten cents of the reward is to be in money," replied Barry. "I 'm to mow the lawn, care for his horses, and run errands for the rest. Slip and I had that all worked out, and Mr. Northway said it was good for a story."

"You 've got a head on your shoulders, Barry. I 'm proud of you."

Barry thrilled at his father's praise.

CHAPTER IX

THE INQUISITIVE REPORTER

BARRY'S grief at the loss of Tricks was tempered somewhat, for the time being, by his curiosity to read the advertisement and Paul Northway's story in the next day's issue of the "News." His hopes of the speedy recovery of the dog had been raised enormously by the reporter's interest. He missed Tricks sorely, however, and his first thought when he awoke the next morning was of his pet.

He could not understand his sister's actions. Her usually sunny disposition had become subdued, almost morose. She was attacked by fits of weeping at any time of day, for whenever Barry came suddenly upon her her eyes were red.

Barry could hardly wait until the first edition of the "News" was off the presses. He went down to the newspaper office to get a copy at the earliest possible moment. Slip grabbed

one of the first papers off and brought it out to Barry. They sat down on the stairway and hunted up the classified advertisements.

"There it is!" cried Slip. "Right at the top of the column. It 's just as we wrote it. They have n't changed a word." Pride of authorship shone on Slip's face, and there came a self-conscious grin to Barry's lips. He thought that everybody in town must be reading the ad and seeing his name in the paper.

"Now let 's see if Mr. Northway got a story in about you an' Tricks," suggested Slip. "There ain't none on the first page; no picture, anyway."

They eagerly turned the page, and a two-column portrait of Barry on the third page seemed to strike him in the face. He felt the hot blood surging up his body, into his cheeks, and clear up to his scalp, and then he felt suddenly cold.

"Lookee!" exclaimed Slip. "Seems as though you were just goin' to speak. What does it say under the picture? 'Barry Cayliss telling a reporter how he lost his dog, Tricks, in Forest Park yesterday afternoon.' An' there 's a three-column head! Jeemiminy, Barry, they 've played it up great!"

The head-lines extended clear across the top of the picture of Barry and a column beyond:

BOY BREAKS TOY BANK TO OFFER REWARD FOR RETURN OF LOST DOG—$5 IN CASH AND $20 IN WORK

A single-column bank under the head-lines, alongside the picture, read: "Barry Cayliss, Son of Robert Cayliss, Architect, Mourns the Loss of Tricks, a Pet Boston Bulldog that Can Perform Many Tricks—Reward Will be Paid and No Questions Asked."

There followed a column story about Barry and the dog, the tricks he could perform; how he was found and an attempt made to obtain him by an unknown man who falsely claimed ownership of him; and how he was lost in the park and his grieving master broke open his bank in order to advertise for the return of his pet. It went on to tell that Barry, feeling that $6.10 was not enough of a reward, but all the money that he and his sister possessed in the world after paying for the advertisement, had decided to offer, in addition, to do chores amounting to twenty dollars in value for the person who returned the dog to him.

"Say, that 's some story!" exclaimed Slip after he had finished reading it aloud. "Everybody 'll know about you an' Tricks."

Barry squirmed rather uncomfortably, for this sudden publicity embarrassed him. He wanted to fold the newspaper so that his picture would be hidden from any chance passer-by, but Slip gloated over the "story" devoted to his friend, and kept the page spread out on his knees.

"It does n't say anything about your helping me write the ad," Barry observed after a silence.

"That was nothin'," replied Slip. "I don't belong in the story. That 's why Mr. Northway did n't put me in."

"Well, I 'm going to take the paper to Mother, Slip. She 'll want to know what Mr. Northway wrote about me."

"I expect she will, Barry. Let me know if anybody returns Tricks. Maybe I can help you work off the twenty-dollar part of the reward."

"I guess you 've got enough to do selling papers and delivering packages for the drug-store. You 're helping support a family, Father says, and I 'm not."

"You an' me 're friends, Barry, an' I 'll do anything for you I can."

"So 'll I for you, Slip. So-long."

"So-long, Barry."

On his way home, through the busy streets in the down-town section, Barry felt that every person he passed was looking at him and thinking: "That 's that Barry Cayliss whose dog was lost and who broke open his bank to advertise for its return." He did not look up at the passers-by. He itched to read the story about himself and Tricks again, but even on the street-car he kept it folded tightly in his hand. He did not want the passengers to see him looking at his own portrait in the paper.

"Why, what a *good* picture of you, Barry," smiled his mother when he showed her the article.

She sat down in the rocking-chair and read the account of the loss of Tricks aloud to Ethel, who leaned her elbow on Mrs. Cayliss's knees and said nothing. Barry experienced an uncomfortable feeling of being held up for public inspection.

"Do you think it will bring Tricks back to me, Mother?"

"It will if the person who finds, or who stole,

him has a heart. The reporter has written a very good article."

"He 's coming here, maybe this afternoon."

"I shall be glad to see him, but I don't know of anything more we can tell him. He 's got about everything in the paper here."

"He said he wanted to talk with Ethel."

"With me!" exclaimed Ethel in dismay. "Oh, Mother! I don't want to see him! Don't let him talk to me!"

"Why, Ethel," reproved her mother, "what is the matter with you to-day? Mr. Northway probably just wants to ask what you know about Tricks's disappearance."

Ethel did not reply, but flung her head down on her mother's lap.

"Mr. Northway 's all right, Ethel. You 'll like him, too." Thus Barry sought to comfort his sister, but she remained troubled and dismayed.

"I don't want to see him," was her only explanation of her aversion to the reporter.

"Nonsense, Ethel. You are too big a girl to act this way. If Mr. Northway wants to talk with you, of course you 'll see him, and not make any fuss about it, either."

It was mid-afternoon when there came a

sharp ring of the door-bell. Barry ran to answer it, shouting,

"It 's Mr. Northway, Mother! I 'll let him in."

The reporter greeted Barry genially.

"Well, Barry, any news of Tricks?"

"No, sir."

"It 's too soon to expect any result yet. We 've had several telephone-calls at the office, mostly from people who have lost dogs. One of them was James Upson, the banker, whose prize Airedale was recently stolen. He 's going to offer two hundred dollars reward for information leading to the capture of any member of the band of dog-stealers or the recovery of his Airedale."

"That 's an awful lot of money," observed Barry.

"Mr. McCallum, the publisher of the 'News,' has offered one hundred dollars more, and it looks as though the reward would soon total around five hundred dollars. If it does, I expect a lot of people will turn detective, me among them, for I 'm detailed on the story."

"Let me help you, Mr. Northway. I 'd like to be a detective."

"Sure, I want you to help."

Mrs. Cayliss appeared at this moment, and Barry introduced the reporter.

"There 's so much interest in lost dogs just now, Mrs. Cayliss, that our city editor, Mr. Sells, asked me to get a follow-up story on Barry and the loss of Tricks. I 've come out to see if I can glean anything new."

"I think you have covered everything very completely in to-day's paper," responded Mrs. Cayliss. "Barry seems to have given you all the details."

"Perhaps his sister can tell me something that 's a little different; just a suggestion that I can elaborate until it looks like news, even if it 's not. That 's the way newspapers keep a story 'alive.' Mr. Sells wants to keep the loss of Tricks and other dogs in the public mind. A daily story about Tricks will help keep up the interest and incidentally make new readers for the 'News.' "

"Ethel is very nervous and wrought up over the loss of Tricks," Mrs. Cayliss told the reporter. "She seems to fear to see you. But if you are very gentle with her I think she will get over that feeling and tell you anything else she might know."

"Trust me, Mrs. Cayliss. I won't frighten

her. There 's just a chance she can throw some light upon the dog's disappearance. You say she seems to be overwrought—"

"She has acted very strangely. And, perhaps I might as well tell you before you see her, she 's been very jealous of Tricks."

"Jealous of Tricks?" repeated Northway quickly. "Why?"

"She 's always been very devoted to Barry, and she felt that Barry was neglecting her for the dog."

"Yet she got the money out of her bank and gave it to Barry to put the advertisement in the paper."

"She would do anything for Barry. She probably blames herself for something she said just before they started for the park yesterday."

"What was that, Mrs. Cayliss?"

"In a moment of jealous anger, she said she hoped the dog-stealers would get Tricks."

Northway drew in his breath in a half-whistle. "This may be serious."

"She did n't mean that, Mr. Northway," Barry hastened to defend Ethel. "After Tricks was lost she said she did n't *want* me to find him but *hoped* I would."

"Rather illogical, Barry, but I think I know what she meant. She was still jealous of the bulldog, but had rather continue to suffer herself than to see you grieve."

"I don't understand Ethel's behavior, Mr. Northway."

"Let me see her, please. You and Barry slip out of the room after she 's got over her first feeling of shyness with me."

"I will bring her down here, then. She 's up in the play-room."

While Mrs. Cayliss was absent from the room, the reporter questioned Barry.

"Had Ethel ever quarreled with you before about Tricks?"

"No, but I could see she did n't like to have me play with Tricks so much, even when she was along."

"You said the dog rescued her Teddy bear on the way home from the park the day you found him. Is she very fond of the bear?"

"It 's one she had when she was five, and she would n't go to sleep then unless it was in the crib with her. She does n't care so much for it now."

"That bear will help me win her confidence,

I hope. Has she any other toy that she 's especially fond of?"

"A doll that Mother gave her for Christmas once."

"What 's its name?"

"Smiles, because it 's got a grin on its face."

"Here she comes. Let 's be talking and pay no attention to her."

The reporter began telling Barry, in a very casual but interesting manner, of his first meeting with Slip Halloran, and did not look around until Mrs. Cayliss spoke.

"This is my daughter, Ethel, Mr. Northway."

He threw the girl a friendly smile and resumed his conversation with Barry.

"Slip was arguing with Policeman McCar-r-rty that the park lake should be turned into a swimming-hole for boys, and McCar-r-rty was threatening to run Slip and the whole gang into the station for jumping into the lake after a strenuous base-ball game. I did n't know McCar-r-rty very well then and thought he was in earnest, so I started to call him down. He listened to all I had to say, then winked and asked if I 'd like to serve the combined jail

sentence of all the boys. Then I tumbled that he 'd just been teasing the gang, and me, too, Slip and McCar-r-rty and I have been friends since then. Do you know Slip, Miss Ethel?"

Northway turned in his chair to look at Ethel over his shoulder.

"Yes, I know him," replied Ethel, "and Policeman McCar-r-rty, too."

"You met him yesterday, with Barry?"

"Yes, sir. Just after Tr—"

"Yes, Barry told me. He also told me the dog rescued your Teddy bear the day you found Tricks. Was it a large toy bear? I 've got to write another story for the 'News' about the loss of Tricks and am trying to find something new I can use."

"The bear is not very big. I dropped it when the automobile horn scared me. Tricks grabbed it and nearly got run over. But Teddy was n't hurt at all."

"Will you let me see the toy bear? I 'd like to describe it in the story."

"Teddy is up-stairs. I 'll get it for you."

"Thank you. Barry tells me you 've got a doll you call 'Smiles.' Do you mind bringing it along? Perhaps Smiles will appear in the story, too."

"All right. I 'll get him."

Ethel seemed to have forgotten her fear of the reporter and returned his smile as she started up the stairs.

"You seem to have a way with children, Mr. Northway," commented Mrs. Cayliss. "Barry has talked about you most of the time to-day, and now Ethel, who was dreading to see you, seems perfectly at ease with you."

"I had a little sister once. I was very fond of her. She would have been a few years older than Ethel now had she lived."

Ethel returned with the Teddy bear, much of whose hair had been worn away, under one arm, and Smiles under the other. She carried them to the reporter.

"You children might entertain Mr. Northway while I look after my cooking," suggested Mrs. Cayliss. "Tell him all you can about Tricks. It may help to get him back."

She left them, and the reporter at once devoted his attention to the Teddy bear.

"He 's lost an ear. How did that happen?"

"Alice Carew's dog was playing with him one day and shook him until his ear came off and then ran away with the ear, and we never could find it."

"We looked for that ear for an hour, I guess," added Barry.

"Did Tricks ever shake the bear or try to tear him to pieces like Alice Carew's dog?"

"No," smiled Ethel. "He 'd often get him and bring him to me—especially in the mornings after I 'd stopped taking Teddy to bed with me."

"Tricks is a wiser dog than I thought. Did he ever do anything with Smiles? Bring it to you?"

"No. Only once. He started to bring the doll to me, but dropped it suddenly and would never touch it after that. We think—Mother does—that he nearly broke a tooth on the doll's china head, or hurt his mouth."

"That gives me two things to write about, Ethel," Northway observed. "You 're helping me out wonderfully."

Ethel flushed prettily, and an eager light came into her blue eyes.

"Will it help you find Tricks for Barry?"

"Perhaps. Barry misses Tricks an awful lot, does n't he?"

"Yes."

"Would you like to help us get him back?"

"Oh, yes, Mr. Northway. I would!"

At that moment Mrs. Cayliss called Barry to go to the store for a pound of butter, and so he heard no more of the conversation.

When he returned, the reporter was holding Ethel's hand, and talking earnestly to Mrs. Cayliss.

"So Tricks was not lost but stolen," Barry heard Mr. Northway saying. "He is either being held for a reward or will be sold in some other town."

"Tricks sold!" exclaimed Barry.

"I 'm afraid he may be, Barry." The reporter spoke gently. "There 's no doubt the dog-stealers got him. Ethel saw two men lifting a dog into an automobile, after she had run a long way trying to catch up with you."

"And you did n't stop them!" Barry cried to his sister.

"She was too far away, Barry. Besides, what could she have done against two grown men? You must n't blame your sister. She was afraid to tell you after having said, in a moment of resentment, that she hoped the dog-stealers would get Tricks. She was afraid you would never forgive her. She feels just as bad as you do, Barry."

"That 's why she 's been crying her pretty

eyes out," added her mother, drawing Ethel upon her lap. "Tell her you do not blame her, Barry."

The boy hesitated a moment, wanting to comfort Ethel, but still resenting her silence and the time that had been lost in the effort to get Tricks back through a lost advertisement. He looked at Northway and found his hand held out to him.

"It 's tough luck, Barry, but we 're not through hunting for Tricks yet. There 's Ethel waiting for you to tell her you don't blame her as she 's blaming herself."

"You could n't help it, Ethel. I 'm not mad at you. I like you just the same as ever."

"Oh, Barry! Do you?" cried Ethel and flung her arms convulsively about his neck.

CHAPTER X

BARRY FOLLOWS A CLUE

BARRY waited impatiently for an answer to the advertisement in the "News," but the next day passed and the day after that without any dog being brought to the house. On the third day, his father offered a reward of fifty dollars for the return of Tricks.

The next morning a negro boy brought out a forlorn and mangy Boston bulldog and insisted that it was Barry's pet.

"You-all advutised a bulldawg that can puh-fo'm tricks. Ah 's got 'im. This is 'im."

"That 's not my dog, Tricks," said Barry. "Tricks can—"

"Yessah, he does tricks a' right. He can stan' on his hin' laigs an' beg. An' with a little coaxin', if he feels like it an' you don't get all tiud out fust, he 'll stan' on his haid."

"How long have you had him?"

"About five months. He jes' came wanderin' in las' spring—"

"Last spring! Why that was *twelve* months ago. Five months ago, it was winter."

"Yassah, tha' 's what Ah said. Las' Christmas he come wanderin' in out of the snow an' he—"

"Well, he 's not my dog. You can take him away."

"You won't pay that fifty dollars reward for 'im?" asked the negro boy, his eyes opening wide in astonishment.

"I would n't pay fifty cents for your old dog," replied Barry. "I want Tricks, the dog I lost, not just any old dog."

Barry shut the door, and the negro youth, after looking perplexedly through the glass at Barry and shuffling about indecisively on the porch for a time, went sorrowfully out to the sidewalk, leading his mangy dog by a piece of heavy twine.

That was the only reply to the advertisement.

Public interest in the loss of Barry Cayliss's pet was kept alive by the daily series of articles that Paul Northway wrote for the "News." The total rewards had now reached six hun-

dred dollars, and the police and many individual citizens were trying to run down clues.

A week passed, and Barry began to despair of ever seeing Tricks gain. He had haunted Forest Park, occasionally with Ethel, more often with Slip Halloran, but usually alone, in the vain hope that the dog might escape from his captors and find his way back to the place where Barry last saw him. He followed three boys and two men who had Boston bulldogs that looked as though they might be Tricks, but when he got near enough to examine them closely none of them had the right markings.

Ethel found that she had less of her brother's society and attention now that Tricks was gone than she had before he was stolen. She respected Barry's grief and did not intrude on it very much. She gradually became less dependent upon her brother for amusement and made friends with several girls about her own age.

Barry grew more and more indifferent to his ordinary games and amusements, and Mr. Cayliss, at the end of two weeks, offered to buy him another dog. He knew a man who had several collie puppies that he would sell for ten dollars each.

"No, I don't want a collie puppy. I want Tricks. It would n't take Tricks's place."

A day or two later, Barry sought out Slip and found him with two other newsboys at the edge of the little down-town park, awaiting for the next edition of the "News" to come from the presses. Barry greeted the other "newsies" whom he had met some weeks before, and took his friend off into the park.

"You look awful blue, Barry," observed Slip.

"I feel awful blue. All the rewards and the ads don't seem to make any difference. Nobody 's brought Tricks back."

"Just you wait, Barry. The thieves are layin' low now because everybody 's lookin' for 'em. After they think things 've blown over, an' show themselves, then they 'd better look out."

"They 'd better look out if I see them," threatened Barry darkly.

"Or me, either. What 'd you do, Barry?"

As Slip spoke, a big, burly man with a cap on his head and a long, bristling mustache came lumbering up a path into the little park on the other side of the fountain. He waddled over to a bench under a small elm-tree and sat down, wiping the perspiration from his face.

"Slip," whispered Barry excitedly. "Who is that?"

"I don't know him, Barry. Why?"'

"I think I 've seen him somewhere, only I can't think just where it was."

"I ain't never seen him before, Barry. How long ago do you think you saw him?"

"A long time ago, I guess, or I 'd remember when."

"He 's expectin' somebody," observed Slip. "See how he keeps lookin' back over his shoulder. He 's tryin' not to show that he 's waitin' for somebody."

With his attention called to the fact, Barry noticed the fat man's quick, sly glances darting about.

"Let 's lay down on the fountain step an' pretend we 're asleep," suggested Slip. "Then we can watch him without him knowin' it."

They sidled around on the circular stone step about the fountain until they had a good view of the elm-tree and the bench underneath it.

Ten minutes went by, and the man still sat on the bench, waiting.

"I guess nobody is coming," whispered Barry.

"Keep quiet," cautioned Slip; "somebody 's comin' now. The man 's stopped lookin' about. His face has changed."

The man's face had indeed changed. It had become set and very quiet. He looked down at the ground.

Slip's surmise proved correct. A moment later a young man, whose face could not be seen at first, approached the bench. He looked quickly about and then sat down two feet distant from the fat man. They talked to each other but kept their faces straight ahead. Barry felt that they did not want any onlooker to suspect that they were talking together.

The young man at length raised his straw hat and wiped his forehead with a blue-bordered handkerchief.

It was the youth who had claimed ownership of Tricks! "Donovan" he had called himself and told Mrs. Cayliss and Barry that they would hear more of him. Barry's heart began to thump.

"It 's the man who came to the house to get Tricks!" he whispered excitedly.

"The fat one?"

"No; the other man."

"Don't let 'em suspect we 're shadowin' them, Barry. Don't move."

The recognition of Donovan seemed to act as a stimulant to Barry's memory. There suddenly flashed into his mind recollection of a fat man with bristling mustache who, Barry had thought at the time, was following him early in the afternoon of the day when Donovan had tried to get Tricks away from him.

"Slip!" he whispered loudly.

"Quiet, Barry. He 's lookin' this way."

Barry felt the conviction burst into his mind that these two men were the dog-stealers and that they were the ones that Ethel had seen lifting Tricks into an automobile. As Donovan replaced his hat and slouched down on the bench, Barry saw a resemblance to the man he had seen in the big touring-car, driving out of the park the afternoon that Tricks disappeared, while he sat on the stone bench by the fountain with Dick Ross.

His heart was pounding with excitement, and he experienced great difficulty in remaining perfectly quiet. He felt an itching, first on his leg, next on his nose, and then between his shoulder-blades. It seemed to him that the

men were never going to leave. After another long interval of waiting, however, Donovan rose and started to saunter slowly away. Barry was on tenter-hooks to jump up and follow him, but the fat man remained seated on the bench.

"I 'm going to follow him," Barry whispered to Slip.

"All right. I 'll come with you."

"No. You watch the fat man, Slip. He followed me the day Donovan came and tried to get Tricks."

"Donovan!" whispered Slip in scorn. "Is that what he called himself?"

"Yes, do you know him?"

"I don't know his name, but he 's an Eye-talian. There ain't no Irishman ever looked like that."

"Anyway, I think both of them belong to the band of dog-stealers, and we 'd better shadow both of them."

"All right. Let 's get up an' go away. I 'll keep the fat one in sight while you trail the Eye-talian."

Barry pulled his hat well down over his eyes, lest the burly man should recognize him, and

stood up. Slip rose, too, and slowly they walked away from the fountain to the street. Barry pretended to have dropped something, so that he could stoop and steal an undetected look back at the bench under the elm-tree.

"He 's watching us," he told Slip as he straightened up, "but I don't think he suspects us. There 's Dono—the Eye-talian—waiting for a street-car. I 'm going to hop on the same car and see where he goes. You follow the other man, and later we 'll meet by the fountain."

"Then we 'll hunt up Mr. Northway an' tell him what we 've found out," suggested Slip.

"Yes. So-long, Slip. I see a car coming down the street."

"Don't let him know you are shadowin' him," cautioned Slip. "They are dangerous, men who would steal dogs, are."

"I 'll be careful," replied Barry, and crossed the street and pretended to be looking in at the store windows, every now and then flinging a glance at the Italian. As the street-car came abreast of him and slowed down for the stop, he ran back across the street, hidden from the man he was shadowing by the trolley. He

caught a glimpse of Slip leaning nonchalantly against a tree, from which he could keep an eye upon the suspect in the park.

Barry jumped on the rear of the car as the Italian boarded it in front. He kept behind the conductor until the youth sat down near the motorman, when he glided into a seat back of a man reading a wide-spread newspaper which Barry proceeded to use as a screen.

The excitement that surged through him gave Barry a pleasant sense of importance. He glowed with satisfaction. He had not lost sight of the man! He wondered if Slip had been equally successful in trailing his quarry.

After the street-car had gone a dozen blocks and turned into a dingy side street where pawnshops and cheap little stores abounded, the Italian alighted. Barry jumped off at the rear of the car, keeping it carefully between his man and himself until he could dash across the street and pretend to examine the articles displayed in the dirty window of a second-hand store.

When the car started up, he saw the man take a sack from the green automobile that stood by the sidewalk and carry it into a dog-

store. He ran across the street, using the automobile as a shield.

In the window were several breeds of puppies. Barry was more convinced than ever that he had discovered a clue that would lead to the recovery of his faithful companion.

There was a brown curtain between the display-window where the puppies were and the interior, and Barry went up close to the glass. He saw a little dried-up old man with a big nose handing several greenbacks to the Italian.

What should he do? Go back to the fountain and wait for Slip and then hunt up Mr. Northway? He might lose all trace of his quarry if he did that.

A scheme then flashed into his mind, which he proceeded at once to put into execution. The reporter had told him to follow this man, if he ever ran across him, and find out where he lived. He dashed back to the other side of the waiting automobile and, when the way seemed clear, climbed quickly into the tonneau. An old blanket and two or three sacks lay on the floor. Barry stretched out, hugging the back of the driver's seat, and drew the blanket and the sacks over him until he was entirely hidden.

If the man discovered him he could do no more than make him get out. Perhaps he could ride there undiscovered until the Italian drove to his home. It was worth trying. Then he would have some real information for Mr. Northway. Perhaps he would discover Tricks all by himself, and his father would not need to pay out the fifty dollars reward he had offered.

He heard voices coming from the store and lay very still. Soon he felt a sack with something heavy in it thrown on top of him.

"You can get the box to the train all right when it is dark, Maxson?" he heard a voice ask, and recognized the voice as that of the man who had said his name was Donovan.

"Yes, Mr. Albertini," replied a soft, silky voice, which Barry found himself disliking heartily. "There 's no danger. Nobody suspects me."

So the man was really an Italian, and his name was Albertini and not Donovan! If Barry had not been so intent upon recovering his pet, his heart would have quailed at the adventure that confronted him. He would not dare to raise his head to see where this Alber-

tini was driving; it might be to some other town. Barry, however, was confident of his ability to find his way home. There were the police; he could always appeal to them.

He heard some one climb into the front seat of the car, and then the automobile quivered and shook as the gas was turned on.

"You 'll give me half?" he heard the silky voice that aroused all his dislike and suspicion ask. "I 'm a poor man, you know, Mr. Albertini, and just see the risk I run."

"Oh, you 'll get half all right," replied Albertini. With a jerk the car shot ahead.

It seemed to Barry that that ride would never end. He drew the blanket from his face, just enough to glimpse the driver's back and a bit of blue sky. He believed that he had been riding for hours, and that he must be miles and miles from home. At last the car was driven into some sort of building; he could tell that from the rumbling of the wheels on the floor. Also, he could see the roof of what appeared to be a shed.

He drew the blanket quickly down over his face just as Albertini reached back for the sack, his fingers almost touching the crouching

boy. Barry heard him jump from the automobile, close and lock the door. At last he ventured from under the sacks. He was in a shed with one small window near the roof.

And he was locked in!

CHAPTER XI

TRICKS IN DANGER

BARRY looked about the shed to see if there might be another door, locked on the inside. There was only the one door. The lone window was far above the boy's head as he stood up on the seat of the automobile. There was no way by which he could climb up to it, and he doubted if he could squeeze through even if he could reach it.

He tried the door but could not budge it. It looked very much as though he were imprisoned for the night, or until some one came for the car. In one corner was a tool-chest with the lid open. He moved it out a little so that he would be able to conceal himself behind it in case any one entered the shed. He picked up two or three old gunny-sacks, which he found in another corner, and threw them behind the chest to use as cover if he should suddenly be surprised.

He decided to sleep in the automobile if he was unable to break out of the garage. It must already be late afternoon; the light had begun to soften, and he was hungry. He had not eaten much at noon for grief at the loss of Tricks.

On the floor of the shed he discovered a twelve-foot board. He placed one end of it on the running-board of the automobile and the other against the wall. It fitted solidly enough, but it lacked about three feet of reaching the window. He climbed up the board, however, and then caught hold of the sill and pulled himself up far enough to look out.

About two hundred feet away was the back of a white frame house. At an upper window stood a little girl, while on the back porch sat a fat, middle-aged woman shelling peas. There were so many trees about the house that he decided it would be almost invisible until a person stumbled upon it. Beyond, he caught a glimpse of flowing water and a wooded hill. He was out in the country, then, and not in another town as he had at first feared.

But in the country there would be no policeman to direct him how to return home! He reassured himself somewhat by the thought

that he could follow a road until he came to another farm-house. He could find help and shelter there.

He tried to open the window, but it was nailed fast. He had just decided to get a hammer from the tool-box and pull out the nails, when he saw a man come out of the house and stop on the porch by the side of the fat woman shelling peas. It was Albertini. The woman laughed at something the Italian said, but Barry could not even hear their voices.

He drew back as Albertini looked in the direction of the shed and slid hastily part-way down the board. A minute later he crept carefully back and raised his face up to the window. Albertini was coming toward the garage!

Barry scrambled quickly down, his heart beating wildly. He removed the board, placed it back on the floor where he had found it, and had just covered himself with the gunny-sacks, behind the tool-box, when he heard the door being unlocked. For a long time he lay there listening to the sounds Albertini made. He heard the splashing of water, and decided the Italian was filling the radiator. That was followed by the sucking sound of a pump inflating a tire.

The man was evidently preparing the car to be taken out. Perhaps the door would be left open and Barry could escape! He was so much elated at the thought that he moved his body slightly to ease the strain on his arm and struck his elbow against the wall. It made a muffled thud, and it seemed to Barry that his heart literally jumped up into his throat. He listened. Everything was quiet but the thumping of his heart. Had Albertini heard?

He detected a shuffling step on the floor coming toward the chest and gave himself up for lost. But Albertini merely fumbled among the tools and then went back to the car. Barry breathed freely again and awoke to the fact that he had broken out into a cold sweat.

It must have been ten or fifteen minutes before he heard the man leave the shed and the door slam shut. He waited in dismay for the snap of the lock, but there was no further sound, and after two or three minutes he cautiously crept out of his hiding-place. The complete silence emboldened him to steal noiselessly to the door. It yielded to his touch!

Slowly he pushed it open an inch and peeped out. He could see no one and widened the aperture. Then he took a long breath and slid

out, keeping one hand on the latch so that he could jump quickly back if Albertini should be in sight. A few yards away was a bushy apple-tree, and he made a dash for it, clambering breathlessly up into its branches. He had seen no one and believed he had been unobserved.

The sudden barking of a dog made him jump. He was horrified lest it should bring some one out to investigate the disturbance. He climbed cautiously several feet higher, where the thick foliage more effectually concealed him. The barking broke out afresh at the rustling of the leaves, and was joined by a deep growl.

"What 's the matter with them dogs?" he heard a booming voice ask.

He kept absolutely still and soon saw a man in blue overalls pass within four feet of the tree in which he was hiding. Peering between the branches, he saw the man run to a shed about twenty feet to the left of the garage.

As he opened the door, a babble of barkings assailed Barry's ears, and he distinguished several dogs in the shadowy interior of the building. The sound brought back to him memory of the day when he and Slip had taken

Tricks and gone out to the woods; this must be the very house he had seen when he climbed the maple and perceived two armed men running toward the hill upon which they had found the clump of walnut-trees.

Why, then, perhaps all these dogs had been stolen, and Tricks was there among them! And this hidden farm-house was the headquarters of the band of dog-stealers!

A feeling of elation swept over him, only to be followed by a swift depression as he realized the predicament he was in. He could not cope with the gang single-handed, and the barking of the dogs had warned them to be on guard.

Perhaps, after the man had gone away from the shed, he could steal up quietly and find out for sure if Tricks was there.

"I don't see nothin' to start them dogs barkin' like that, Mr. Albertini," came the overalled man's deep voice after a minute or two. "I s'pose one of them thought he heard somethin', or dreamed he did, and set all the others off to howlin'."

"All right, Fawcett. See that the door is locked. Turk ought to be here by this time. If he does n't come in five minutes, I 'm going over to Minturn. Get the car out. I found a

message waiting for me. Tell Turk I had to go right over."

"All right. You want any of them dogs crated to-night?"

"Yes, that one the papers are kickin' up such a fuss about."

"That trick bulldog?"

"Yes, and the Airedale. It would n't be exactly healthy for us to have them found in our possession just now. Maxson will get rid of them."

"It *would* need some tall explainin'," agreed Fawcett as he left the shed and went to the garage.

So Tricks was there! And they were going to get rid of him that night!

Barry was thankful that he had arrived in the nick of time. He must contrive somehow to rescue Tricks at once. Albertini had said Maxson would get rid of the bulldog and the Airedale—it must be the dog stolen from Mr. Upson, the banker—that night. Perhaps they were going to kill Tricks and the Airedale so that they would not be found in their possession!

He was desolated at the thought. If only Slip, or Mr. Northway, was with him! A boy

not quite ten years old could n't do much all alone against a band of men—and armed men at that.

The rumbling of the automobile broke in upon his thoughts, and he saw Albertini drive off. The overalled man watched the car disappear down the driveway and then went into the house.

Barry waited for a few minutes until quiet reigned again. Then he climbed cautiously down the tree and stole around the shed where the dogs were kept, to the side farthest away from the house. Once there, hidden from observation, he debated how next to proceed. The door was securely locked; no use to try that, even if it had not been in full view from the house. He searched diligently for a crack through which he could peep, but a long, narrow cleat had been nailed tight down over every junction of the upright planks used in building the shed.

At length he found a knot-hole, the size of a silver dollar, two feet up from the ground. He applied one eye to the opening, but could distinguish nothing. It was dark as night inside to the eyes just refocusing themselves after

being accustomed to the strong light outside.

After a minute things began to shape in the interior of the building, and he could make out shadowy forms lying here and there. These forms resolved themselves at length into the bodies of dogs. The shed was divided into two or three pens, and there seemed to Barry to be three or four animals in each pen. Some of them were tied.

Was Tricks there among them?

Barry felt that he must find that out in order to know how to proceed. It lacked but about an hour of sunset, and if he was going to do anything he must do it in a hurry. He whistled softly through the knot-hole. There came a faint rustling sound, and Barry fancied he felt the soft warmth of a dog's breath on his face. A low "Woof!" sounded right at his ear.

"Here, Tricks, here!" he whispered.

There came a louder bark at the aperture: it was not Tricks, however, and Barry repeated his call, raising his voice.

This time there was an answering bark from the far side of the shed that sent the blood coursing rapidly through the boy's veins.

It was Tricks! He had found Tricks!

Forgetting caution in the joy that flooded his heart, Barry again called his playfellow in still louder tones.

Tricks yelped joyously and came tearing around the shed, sniffing along the floor. Another dog began to bark, and by the time Tricks had located his master through the knot-hole there was a pandemonium of sounds within the shed.

Barry tried to pat Tricks's head through the opening, but he could get only two fingers through it. He ran the fingers affectionately along the dog's caressing muzzle. The boy wrenched at the knot-hole in the vain effort to tear away part of the board, and Tricks kept leaping up and pawing at it. Tricks wanted to fly to his master's arms just as ardently as Barry wanted to press that adored companion to his breast.

Barry was brought suddenly to his senses when the door of the shed was flung open, flooding the interior with light. Fawcett and a youth of seventeen or eighteen years appeared. Barry drew quickly back, but Tricks kept leaping up against the wall.

"What 's the matter with that dog?" boomed Fawcett's bass voice. "He acts crazy."

"He smells somethin' there at the back," answered the youth.

"You go round to the left, and I 'll take the right," ordered the man. "Quick now!"

Barry jumped back from the shed and looked wildly about for a place of refuge. He began to run without knowing just where he wanted to go. He stumbled and fell at full length in some tall grass close to three sapling oaks. He heard the footsteps of Fawcett and the boy coming around the shed and did not dare get up, nor even to stir. The barking of the dogs continued.

Barry's heart beat so violently that it hurt him, and it was difficult to draw his breath. Would they find him? He moved his head ever so slightly to see if the grasses and weeds were tall enough to conceal him. They stood but half a foot above his prostrate body, and any one looking directly down, even from a distance of several yards, would perceive him at once. He was, however, partly behind a clump of saplings, and that afforded some protection.

"There don't seem to be nobody about," observed the boy after a time.

"I swan, somethin' started them dogs off,"

replied Fawcett. "They would n't start yelpin' like that twicet within so short a time unless somethin' strange was up. You take a run off among them bushes in back there, while I get a gun."

"Hi, there! Look!" warned the boy. "Two of them dogs is out!"

"I swan, I forgot to shut the door! Here, we got to get them dogs back first thing. Schimmerhorn 'll raise hail Columbia with us if any of them is missing."

They both disappeared around the shed, and Barry wriggled and squirmed his way through the grass and weeds, in and out among the scrub-oaks until he reached a clump of trees. He rose to his feet.

"Hist!" came a low whisper back of him.

Barry started, then stood still, his blood chilling in his veins and then flooding his body with warmth. His scalp moved.

"Barry!" continued the low voice. "It 's me—Slip."

"Slip!" breathed Barry, and the relief to his taut nerves was so great that he simply sat down in the grass and panted.

"Yep," replied Slip, still whispering. "I fol-

lered the fat man all afternoon. He lives in that house."

Slip crept up to Barry, and they grasped hands, eager for the comfort of companionship.

"I 'd just sneaked up among the trees when I heard the dogs break out barkin'. Then I saw somebody run an' hide in the grass. I did n't know it was you until you got to the trees an' stood up. How 'd you get here?"

"In the automobile. Albertini—that 's the man who said his name was Donovan—went into a dog-store, and I crawled into his automobile that was waiting there and covered up. He did n't find me."

"We came by trolley," explained Slip. "They 're in cahoots, the fat man an' the Eyetalian."

"Yes," agreed Barry, "and they 've got Tricks locked up in that shed. He knew me when I called and tried to jump right through the wall to get to me. And there 's a dozen more dogs there, I guess."

"Those two men are the leaders of the band, I bet, Barry."

"And we 're just in time, Slip. They 're going to get rid of Tricks and an Airedale to-

night. I heard the Eye-talian say so. They don't want them found in their possession, he said, because the papers have been making such a fuss about their being stolen."

"Then we 've got to hurry," said Slip. "There ain't no time to lose."

"But what 'll we *do,* Slip?"

"Get Mr. Northway an' the police. He 'll know what to do."

"But they might kill Tricks while we 're after Mr. Northway," objected Barry.

"Yes, that 's right. One of us 'll have to stay here an' keep watch while the other goes back to town."

"I 'll stay," Barry spoke up quickly. "If they take Tricks out to do anything to him, I 'll call and maybe he 'll try so hard to get away that they can't hold him."

"It 'll be dark soon. I can't get back with the police till awful late—maybe nine o'clock. You won't be afraid out here all alone at night?"

"No, not as long as Tricks is there. Besides, we 've got to watch the men."

"Yes, an' if they go away an' take any dogs with 'em, you 'll have to follow 'em."

"I 'll try, but tell Mr. Northway to hurry.

They know somebody 's been out here because the dogs made such a fuss. They almost had me once."

"You gotta be careful an' not let 'em get you, Barry. They 're dangerous. There ain't nothin' they would n't do, I guess. They 'll be watchin' if they think somebody's trying to get at the dogs."

"I 'll be careful, Slip. Telephone to Mother and tell her I 'm all right, will you?"

"Sure."

"Maybe Father will come with Mr. Northway and the police."

"Here 's a bar of chocolate, Barry. Eat it. I bought it while the fat man was eatin' something in Schirk's restaurant. I had some."

"I *am* hungry," admitted Barry, taking a bite of chocolate.

"You better not stay so close," Slip advised his friend. "Maybe they 'll search the woods here. Let 's get out now."

Slip turned and walked swiftly and quietly back into the woods overlooking the river. Barry followed at his heels. The sun was almost down, and the light under the trees was dimming rapidly.

"I gotta light out," observed Slip, "an' get

the next trolley. When it gets darker you creep up where you can watch the house. Sure you would n't rather have me stay an' watch? I don't mind."

"No. Slip. Tricks is my dog."

"That 's the way I 'd feel about it. Well, so-long, Barry."

"So-long, Slip."

Unconsciously their hands sought each other's and they stood there a moment before Slip darted quickly away among the trees.

He was lost to sight in a moment, and Barry shivered as the darkness increased under the trees, and a feeling of utter loneliness came over him.

He had never in his life been out alone in the woods, in the country, and it made his blood chill at the thought of a long, lonely vigil in the blackness of night.

But there was Tricks! He had found Tricks, and he must be rescued this night, for Albertini, the mysterious "Turk," and Fawcett were going to get rid of him before morning.

CHAPTER XII

CAPTURE OF BARRY

BARRY waited in the forest, by the bank of the river, until long after the sun went down and darkness began to fall swiftly. He shivered at the occasional rustling of the leaves, imagining that perhaps the men at the farm-house were out searching for him. He sat with his back against the bole of the big tree, with underbrush on each side that effectually concealed him.

He decided that if he waited much longer he might get lost among the trees in the darkness, and rose warily. He stole quietly along, keeping behind the shelter of trees whenever possible. The lonely cry of a whippoorwill, from a bush not more than five feet from his side, made the cold chills run up and down his spine. He stopped dead and made himself just as small as he could. He had heard that eery call before and knew perfectly that it was only a whippoorwill; nevertheless, his muscles seemed

numbed by terror and his brain unable to send a command to his legs to move.

When he did start on again, he kept himself from running and possibly betraying his presence in the woods only by the strongest exertion of will-power. Soon through the trees he glimpsed light shining from the kitchen window of the house, and he felt safer. That blob of light in the darkness was most companionable.

When he reached a position from which he could command a view of the dwelling and of the shed, he stopped, keeping well behind the trunk of a big tree. The minutes went slowly by, and it got almost completely dark. It seemed to him that he had been waiting for hours. No sounds came from the house, and Barry was oppressed by the loneliness of the night. If he could have Tricks with him!

He wondered if Slip and his father and the police were on the way out. Oh, if they would only come and he could have Tricks in his arms again!

The silence continued, and the darkness seemed all the blacker for the big stars in the sky. He determined to creep up to the back of the shed and whistle softly, just once, for

Tricks. Perhaps the dog would come to the knot-hole again, and he could pat his muzzle.

Barry stepped slowly and softly, but twice a dried twig snapped under his heel, and he stood stock-still, his heart in his mouth. At length the shed was reached, and Barry felt around blindly until he found the knot-hole. He put his mouth close against it and whistled, not loud enough to be heard ten feet away, he was certain.

There seemed to be a movement among the dogs in the shed.

"Here, Tricks, here," breathed Barry, and in a moment there was a whining on the other side of the wall. Then he felt Tricks's warm tongue on his two fingers. Another dog in the shed growled. Barry shivered. Silence fell again. Then one of the dogs barked, followed by another.

Barry turned and started to steal away when he was blinded by a flash of light in his face.

"I 've got him!" a harsh voice cried. A huge hand clutched his shoulder, and he went to the ground under the impact of a burly figure that hurled itself against him.

"Hold his arms! He may have a gun! Hold his arms!" called a boyish voice in tre-

mendous excitement, and the light was again flashed upon his face.

"Well, I swan!" exclaimed the big voice of Fawcett, the blue-overalled man. "It 's nothin' but a kid!"

The breath had been knocked out of Barry by the weight of Fawcett, and for the time being he was too dazed even to move. When he got his breath back, he squirmed about under Fawcett's hands until he could look up. The youth whom he had seen in the afternoon held a pocket flash-light in his hand. Fawcett arose, keeping a tight hold on the collar of Barry's blouse.

"So it 's you that 's been raisin' all this hullabaloo with them dogs," observed the man, plainly puzzled. "What 're you doin' here, anyway?"

Barry did not answer.

"What 's your name?"

Still Barry did not reply and Fawcett jerked him around, directly facing him.

"Mum, huh? Won't answer, huh? Turk 'll larn you to speak when you 're spoke to."

"Let 's have a look at him," said the youth, and poked his flash-light so close to Barry's

face that he shut his eyes to protect them from the glare. "I ain't never set eyes onto him before, Mr. Fawcett. He don't belong round here. I know every boy in the vi-cinity."

"He 's from town," observed Fawcett. "See them store-clothes? Come on, you. We 'll see if you answer Schimmerhorn when *he* speaks to you."

Barry braced his feet and held back, more with the idea of gaining time for Slip and the police to arrive than with any hope of breaking loose and escaping.

"No holdin' back now!" commanded Fawcett, and gave a jerk with one arm that nearly swept Barry off his feet. He went along quietly after that. It was useless to resist. His mouth was so dry that his tongue rasped his palate when he tried to swallow.

A burly figure appeared in the kitchen door as they approached the house. It was the fat man of the park that Slip had followed.

"What set the dogs to barking?" he demanded in a hoarse, guttural voice.

"It was this boy, Mr. Schimmerhorn," replied Fawcett, pushing Barry forward. "He was sneakin' up behind the shed."

"It must a-bin him that they was barkin' at this afternoon," added the youth.

"Do you know him?" questioned Schimmerhorn and, when both had replied in the negative, added, "Have you ever seen him before?"

"No, and he refuses to answer our questions."

"Well, he 'll get over that mighty soon," snapped the fat man. "Bring him into the house."

He turned and disappeared into an inner room. Fawcett shoved Barry after him.

"He 'll larn you to talk," muttered the youth, with a hostile grin on his face.

The woman whom Barry had seen on the back porch shelling peas, and the little girl whose face he had glimpsed at an up-stairs window, sat at the kitchen table. The woman gave him a sympathetic smile, he thought, and spoke.

"You 'll have to talk sooner or later. Better do it at once," she counseled him. "You 'll be better off in the end."

The girl stared at Barry, her pale-blue eyes wide open. Barry cast an appealing glance back at the woman as Fawcett pushed him through the door. The girl was still looking

unsmilingly at him. The woman had returned to her supper.

The man addressed as Schimmerhorn was sitting in a rocking-chair that creaked under his weight. The floor added a heavier creak.

"What 's your name?" he demanded suddenly, with a guttural explosiveness.

Remembering the woman's advice, Barry was on the point of answering when it dawned upon him that if he told his name the man would know that he was Tricks's master. He wanted to gain time. Fearful of being recognized from his pictures in the "News," he avoided looking directly up at the man and kept his head turned as much as possible.

"Come, now," threatened Schimmerhorn. "I don't usually ask questions twice."

Should he tell him his name? Even as he debated, Barry found himself answering, but it was the name of Jack Halloran that he uttered.

"Where do you live?"

"In town."

"What are you doing out here?"

Barry glanced about the room. A clock on the wall showed it was a quarter to nine.

Fawcett broke into the conversation:

"He was tamperin' with them dogs, Mr. Schimmerhorn. He was leanin' up against the back of the shed when we caught him. I heard him whistle an' call something' sort of under his breath, an' then one of the dogs whined."

"What did you want hanging about the shed?" asked Mr. Schimmerhorn. "Do you think one of my dogs belongs to you?" There came a long pause. Barry tried to collect his scattered thoughts to give a plausible reply, and the man shot forth another question: "Which one?" with a loudness and explosiveness that made Barry jump.

"I—I—" he stopped and swallowed and moistened his lips.

"Maybe the dog 'll talk if he won't, Turk —Mr. Schimmerhorn," ventured Fawcett. "Take him out there an' see if any of the dogs claims acquaintance. He looks like a nice boy. I don't want to see him hurt. It might make trouble afterwards."

"That 's very sensible advice," said the fat woman, appearing suddenly in the doorway. "Don't you go and invite trouble, Turk."

"Marta, you keep out of this," stormed the man.

"I won't have the boy hurt," replied the

woman. "Once before I warned you. You did n't—"

"Take him out," growled Schimmerhorn. "There 's some sense in the scheme, anyway."

CHAPTER XIII

TRICKS BETRAYS HIS MASTER

FAWCETT'S grasp closed like a vise about Barry's arm, and he led him out to the shed where the dogs were kept. The youth with the flash-light and Turk Shimmerhorn followed.

Fawcett gave the key to the youth, the door was unlocked, and Barry was thrust inside, the other three standing in the doorway. The boy played the flash-light upon Barry's face. The dogs looked up, but for a moment none of them made a motion to rise. Barry hoped Tricks would not give any sign and turned partly away.

But Tricks uttered a short, low "Woof!" and then sprang to his feet barking joyfully and ran to Barry and jumped up, trying to reach his face.

"I swan!" cried Fawcett. "It 's the Cay—"

"Shut up!" ordered Schimmerhorn. "Verfluchte Dummköpfe! We should have known! Where 's Pete?"

"He had a sudden call to go to Minturn for another—"

An abrupt gesture from Schimmerhorn silenced him.

"Take the boy back to the house and lock him in the little room up-stairs. We 've got to act, and act quick. Did Pete say when he 'd be back?"

"No, Mr. Schimmerhorn, but he ought to be here any minute now."

It was no use denying his identity any longer —Tricks had made that impossible—and so now Barry dropped on his knees and hugged the dog and pulled his ears and squeezed his muzzle. Tricks was overjoyed at the reunion, and his stumpy tail almost wagged itself off as he danced about his master, licking the boy's hands, muzzling his head under Barry's arms, and generally expressing exuberant delight.

"I swan," said Fawcett; "you might think they was brothers who had n't seen each other for years."

"Take him up to the house," ordered Schimmerhorn, "and you, Fred, bring out four of those crates."

"Yes, Mr. Schimmerhorn," replied the youth and hastened off while Fawcett laid a hand on

Barry's blouse collar and dragged him to his feet. Barry's breath escaped in a grunt at the suddenness with which he was lifted, and Tricks, thinking his master was being hurt, sprang for Fawcett's arm, setting his teeth in through his sleeve and grazing the flesh so that it bled freely.

"Great guns!" bellowed Fawcett. "The dog 's tearin' my arm off!"

He loosened his grasp of Barry and with his free hand pounded Tricks on the head in the effort to make him let go. It was now Barry's turn to go to the aid of his playfellow, and he seized Fawcett's free hand in both of his.

The man raised both arms high in the air, the boy dangling from one and the growling dog from the other, both kicking frantically.

"You let Tricks be!" Barry was half sobbing. "You made him do it!"

Tricks growled a response and, still dangling from the sleeve of Fawcett's stout, "hickory" shirt, tried to shake the arm.

Turk Schimmerhorn broke into a loud guttural guffaw.

"Haw, haw, haw! Fawcett, you 're the funniest looking sight! Haw, haw! It 's safer to tackle a lion than a boy or his dog."

"It 's all right for you to laugh, Mr. Schimmerhorn, but, I swan, if the dog had about tore your arm off—"

Fawcett gave a lunge with his right arm and shook Barry loose, and the boy fell to the floor.

"Call that dog off," ordered Schimmerhorn, "or we 'll have to knock him senseless."

"Senseless!" boomed Fawcett in an aggrieved voice. "I swan! Could anything be more senseless than him jumpin' at me like that? I did n't harm the boy. I was n't goin' to."

"Tricks did n't know that," explained Barry. "Here, Tricks, let go. Come here."

Tricks squirmed, but whether in an attempt to let go his hold on Fawcett's sleeve or to get a firmer grip could not be told.

"Let his hind feet touch the ground," cried Barry. "Then he won't be afraid of falling."

"I swan! He 'd just brace himself to take another hold."

Schimmerhorn burst into laughter again.

"How long do you think you can hold your arm up with the dog hanging on? Half an hour? I 'll give you five dollars if you can do it for half an hour."

"My arm 's just about broke off now."

Barry ran to the dog and threw both arms about the middle of his body and lifted him up.

"Let go, Tricks!" he commanded. "Down!"

Tricks let go his hold of Fawcett's sleeve and turned to caress his master's face.

"I swan, I almost lost an arm," observed Fawcett, solicitously rolling back his shirt-sleeve.

"It 's nothing but a surface wound," said Schimmerhorn, examining his arm. "By to-morrow you won't know there 's anything the matter with your arm."

"It stings like fury," returned Fawcett. "I swan, you don't suppose I 'll get them rab—them rabians from him, do you?"

"The dog 's not mad that way, Fawcett. He was just mad at you for laying hands on the boy."

The youth, Fred, now returned, bearing an oblong box with wide spaces between the boards at top and sides.

"I heard a car run in," he reported. "It must be Albertini."

"All right. You 've got your work cut out for you. Fawcett, take the boy and lock him up."

"What—what are you going to do with me?" asked Barry, hugging Tricks tight.

"Oh, you 'll be all right. You 've got gumption," replied Schimmerhorn, and there was a look on his face that expressed an unwilling admiration for the boy. "No harm will come to you, but I 've got to look out for my own skin first, so you 'll just have to keep company with yourself for a while up-stairs in the house."

"You 'd better go right to sleep," advised Fawcett, "an' when you wake up in the morning you 'll find the door unlocked an' can go anywheres you like."

The chugging of an automobile was heard. A moment later it stopped, and then Pete Albertini came running up.

"What 's the matter?" he cried. "What are you doing out here? Who 's that boy?"

"You ought to know, Pete." Schimmerhorn spoke quietly with a mocking light in his eyes. "You 've met him several times before."

The Italian took a swift look at Barry's face and swore roundly.

"We 've got to make a clean get-away, Turk, and make it quick. He 's thicker 'n peas in a pod with that reporter on the 'News,' North-

way. The whole police force is probably scouting about for him now. How 'd he get here?"

"He seems remarkably uncommunicative for a boy of his years," replied Schimmerhorn mockingly.

"Well, you can make him talk easy enough. I 've seen you do it with grown men."

"The old lady won't stand for the rough stuff with the kid. Besides, I like his pluck, and it won't do us any good to hurt him. In certain circumstances it might make it worse."

"Well, I 'll have a try. You always snivel and turn chicken-livered if there 's a kid!" cried Albertini and took a rapid step toward Barry, reaching out one hand.

Tricks crouched for a spring and growled a warning.

"Look out, Pete!" exclaimed Fawcett. "That dog 's got jaws of iron. I know. I swan, he liked to tear my arm off."

Albertini came to a full stop.

"Oh, well, it don't matter. Just curiosity on my part, anyhow."

"How *did* you get out here, boy? Come, you might tell a fellow," coaxed Schimmerhorn with a smile. "I 've saved you from—well, from several unpleasant experiences to-night."

Barry looked up at the burly man.

"*He* brought me out," he replied, nodding his head in the direction of Albertini. "I rode out from town with him in his automobile."

A savage, grim look spread over Schimmerhorn's face at the boy's words, and he took a heavy stride toward Albertini. Barry was frightened at the changed expression on his face.

"Pete!" cried Turk Schimmerhorn in a rumbling, snarling voice, "if you've double-crossed me, I 'll get you—"

Even Barry could read the look of fear that instantly overspread the Italian's face.

"Wait, Turk," he cried. "The boy 's lying. Get this straight. I 've not seen him since the day I got his dog."

Barry shrank from the passions that had so quickly written themselves on the faces of the two men.

"Mr. Albertini did n't know I was in his automobile," Barry explained in a voice that shook. "I climbed in while he was in the dog-store and hid under the robe and the sacks in the back of the car."

"There, Turk," appealed Albertini, "you see how you wronged me?"

"I see," replied Schimmerhorn savagely, "but you 've put enough evidence in the boy's hands to send us all up for several years. Now we 've got to try to undo it and do it quick. Fawcett, help Fred crate the four dogs we 're going to send off to-night. I 'll take care of the boy."

"The Airedale, the collie, the rat terrier and the—the kid's—bulldog, Mr. Schimmerhorn?"

"Yes. Is it necessary for me to go over that with you again—and yet again?"

Fawcett shrank from the angry gleam in Schimmerhorn's eyes.

Barry pleaded for his pet with his captor, who had smiled at him but a few minutes earlier.

"Not Tricks, Mr. Schimmerhorn! Please don't kill Tricks!"

"I 'm not going to kill the dog, boy, so come along quietly now."

"And you won't send him away to some other town?" pursued Barry, catching hold of one of the man's big, fat hands.

"I can't promise you anything more now," Schimmerhorn replied. "Perhaps in the morning, when we see how things stand—"

He did not finish his sentence but left the

shed abruptly, holding Barry's hand so tight that it hurt for an hour after the man had shoved him into a little, one-windowed room up-stairs and locked the door.

Barry was the victim of conflicting emotions as he lay there in the dark on a little cot. Would Mr. Northway and Slip and his father and the police get there in time?

Meanwhile, he was the prisoner of the band of dog-stealers, and the minutes dragged themselves slowly along.

CHAPTER XIV

THE GIANT POLICEMAN TO THE RESCUE

BARRY was too excited to sleep and lay on the cot in the darkness listening to the hum of voices and tramping of feet down-stairs and the tap-tapping of a hammer in the shed. Occasionally a chink of light filtered beneath the door into the room as some one carrying a lamp mounted the stairway to the second floor. He tried to open the window to see if he could climb down, but found it immovable.

It seemed to Barry that it must be midnight, and he despaired of help reaching him in time to save Tricks. When a clock down-stairs struck the hour some minutes later, Barry was greatly surprised when he counted but ten strokes.

Perhaps, after all, Slip was even then approaching the house with Mr. Northway and the police! Barry sat up, hope renewing itself in his bosom. Slip was a good friend; he 'd do

everything that any boy could to help him save Tricks.

He was startled by a light tapping on the window. His heart stopped beating at first and then thumped away so fast and hard that a wave of warmth swept over his body. It was Slip. Help had come at last! He listened for a sound outside his door, but everything was quiet. Then he tiptoed over to the window and pressed his face close against the pane.

At first he could distinguish nothing but the stars in the sky. Then a head became indistinctly outlined. It was not Slip! It was the head of a girl!

The tapping came again, followed by a slight metallic click and the creaky groan of a nail being drawn out of wood. Then the window was raised a few inches, and a low voice reached his ears.

"Boy, are you awake?"

"Yes," he replied in guarded tones.

"Come on out, quick, and climb down."

"What for? Are you helping me to escape?"

"Don't stop to talk now. I 'll tell you when you 're safe."

Barry helped raise the window high enough

to permit him to climb out. Then the girl descended the ladder ahead of him and waited on the ground.

"Help me take the ladder down," she whispered. "He 'll kill me just about if he finds I 've helped you escape."

"Who? Turk Schimmerhorn?"

"No; he 's my father. Pete."

"Pete Albertini? I hate him."

"So do I."

Barry wondered how the girl had been able to bring the ladder and place it against the window by her own efforts. It was about all both of them could manage together to get it down and carry it around to the other side of the house.

The girl seized Barry's hand and led him off into the darkness. The grass underneath soon gave way to soft earth. Little ridges of dirt crumbled under his feet. The girl had brought him out to the road.

"I 've got to go back before they know I 've been away," she announced, stopping under the dense shadow of a big tree.

"What 's your name?" asked Barry.

"Hilda. You 're Barry Cayliss. I knew you when I first saw you."

"How?"

"From your picture in the 'News.' "

"Why 'd you help me escape from them?"

"Mother wanted me to. . . . And I did n't want them to hurt you."

"Did your mother help you put up the ladder?"

"Yes. I 've got to go now." But she hesitated.

"Good-by," said Barry, and reached for the hand that had let go of his when they stopped under the big tree.

"Good-by." But she did n't leave yet.

"Good-by. I won't forget what you 've done for me . . . Hilda."

"B-B-Barry, Mother said . . . You won't send my father to prison? . . . Will you?"

"Not if I get Tricks back, I won't."

"I can't get him now. I 'll find out from Fawcett where they send him. Maybe you can find him there."

"Thank you, Hilda. I won't send Mr. Schimmerhorn to prison, then."

"Good-by." The girl squeezed his hand in thanks and left him.

He could distinguish her shadowy form for a moment gliding along the road, back toward

the house, and then it was blotted out, and only the far stars remained.

Barry looked about and could see nothing but the black masses of shadows that he knew were trees. He shivered at being set out alone on the road at night. If Tricks had been with him, he would not have been afraid. Should he wait there and see what happened?

If only Slip and Mr. Northway would come! If they did not come at all, what should he do? Try to find the trolley-tracks and go home? He did not know how to find the trolley unless he should cut through the woods, over the hill where he and Slip had found the hidden walnut-trees. And it would be hopeless for him to try to find that hill at night—even had he had the courage.

Should he follow the road? He might come to a farm-house and find shelter for the night. He took several steps forward, but was brought to a full halt by a yelp from the shed where Tricks was a prisoner. They were going to put Tricks in one of those crates and send him away! Maybe to New York or Chicago, where he 'd never see him again.

That thought decided him. He could not go away and leave Tricks. Perhaps when all

the folks were in the house he could find his pet and tear off one of the boards on the crate and get him out. Then he would not be afraid to adventure out into the night.

He crossed to the opposite side of the road and walked on the grass so that there should be no scrunching of footsteps to give him away. Then he circled about toward the shed, where the sound of hammering still issued. He had gone but a short distance when a loudly whispered command in a man's voice brought him to a halt.

"Stop where you are!" ordered the voice. "And don't make a sound!"

Barry obeyed, his teeth beginning to chatter. He felt a large hand searching over his head and shoulders.

"Why, it 's only a boy!" continued the voice. "Is it you, Barry?"

Barry recognized Policeman McCar-r-rty, and a sigh of satisfaction escaped him. The chill that had caused his teeth to begin chattering gave way to a warm flush of contentment.

Help had come at last! Slip had not failed him! He knew Slip would not fail him. And Policeman McCar-r-rty! Everything was going to be all right.

"Yes," Barry said, at length replying to the question, and reached for the policeman's hand. "It 's me, Mr. McCar-r-rty."

"And you stood at your post like a brave boy."

"Where 's Slip and Mr. Northway? And did Father come?"

"Yes, they 're all here, and four more policemen. They 've separated to surround the place. Slip 's somewheres with that reporter chap. They 're hunting for you. Mr. Cayliss is over here a bit. Want to see him?"

"Oh, yes, Mr. McCar-r-rty!"

"I sort of thought you might, Barry. Come with me."

Barry was lifted up and carried in the strong arms of the policeman. They circled a clump of bushes and stopped by a shadowy figure under the blackness of a tree that stood by itself.

"Here 's Barry, Mr. Cayliss," whispered the policeman.

Barry stretched out his arms to that shadowy figure and was clasped to his father's breast.

"Oh, Barry! We 've had such a fright! Your mother is almost out of her mind with anxiety. But you are safe! Safe!"

Barry returned his father's kiss. Suddenly he relaxed and felt sleepy. All danger was passed now. They would get Tricks, and then he could go home to his mother.

A low whistle came stealing into their ears.

"They 're ready to rush them," whispered McCar-r-rty. "There might be a bit of gun-play, Mr. Cayliss. Better leave Barry here. And you 'll stay with him if you 'll take my advice."

"Don't let them get Tricks, Father," pleaded Barry.

"I 'm going with you, McCarty," announced Mr. Cayliss. "Barry, you stay here, right by this tree, back up against it, so you 'll be in no danger, until all the shooting is over—if there is any shooting."

"But Slip is out there," objected Barry.

"You can join us in a little while, Barry," Policeman McCar-r-rty promised. "Just now you 'd better stay here."

CHAPTER XV

ESCAPE OF "TURK" SCHIMMERHORN

THERE came another low whistle, and Barry found himself alone, with the shadowy figures of the policeman and his father stealing on toward the house and the shed. Soon he could distinguish another figure advancing cautiously past a streak of light flung out upon the darkness from a window of the house. It was another policeman.

Light also streamed from the opened door of the shed, and in two or three minutes Barry saw the figures of Policeman McCar-r-rty and of his father dash through the doorway.

"Hands up!" he heard the policeman say in short, sharp utterance.

"Hands up!" called another voice, which Barry might have thought an echo had he not seen a policeman standing in the doorway of the farm-house, with revolver drawn.

A rumbling, bellowing outburst of words, in

the voice of Turk Schimmerhorn, came from the dog-shed, where the light was suddenly extinguished.

"Close in!" commanded McCar-r-rty's voice. "He 's trying to escape!"

Lights flashed on and off from three or four flash-lights, and two shots were fired. In one of the sudden illuminations, Barry saw the figure of Slip Halloran standing beside Paul Northway.

He heard a lumbering tread as of a massive figure coming toward him through the underbrush. Before reaching him, it was halted by a squeal of rage and fear which, for some unaccountable reason, Barry recognized as coming from Pete Albertini, though it did not sound at all like his ordinary voice.

They had caught Albertini! Barry saw him struggling in the arms of two policemen as two flash-lights were pointed crisscross at the group.

The boy heard a half-snort from the big figure which had halted a few yards from him and which must, he knew, be Turk Schimmerhorn. The leader of the gang was going to escape! Should he cry out a warning to his father and Policeman McCar-r-rty?

"You won't send my father to prison? . . . Will you?" A low voice seemed to be whispering the words in his ear. He turned his head, half expecting to see Hilda, but of course no one was there. It was just a trick of his mind, something that reminded him of his promise to Schimmerhorn's little daughter.

He knew at once he was not going to warn his father and Policeman McCar-r-rty that Schimmerhorn was escaping. Tricks was still in the shed, in a crate, probably, ready to be shipped away, but he was safe. And he had promised Hilda not to send her father to prison if Tricks was returned.

The ambling figure of Schimmerhorn came close to the tree behind which Barry shrank, and then hesitated for a moment.

"I . . . I hope you get away, Mr. Schimmerhorn," Barry found himself saying, without knowing that he intended to utter the words.

Schimmerhorn lumbered around, seeking the owner of the voice.

"What 's that? Who 's there?" His voice was sputtering and guttural even when it whispered.

"Barry Cayliss," answered Barry, and slipped

out from behind the tree. "I hope they don't catch you."

"How 'd you get here?" demanded Schimmerhorn, still in a whisper. "You seem to be everywhere at once. Well, you 've cooked my goose, and since you are willing to help me escape I won't wait to hear your story. You 're a real boy. I 'll say that for you. I 'm really glad, as long as things have turned out this way, that you 're going to get your dog back."

"Thank you," said Barry. "That 's why I am letting you escape."

Schimmerhorn laughed silently.

"You might do one thing more for me, since you 're so kind and obliging: tell my wife or my daughter that I 've gone to Phil's, but don't let anybody hear you tell them."

"I 'll tell her when no one's around," promised Barry.

"Good-by, Barry. You ought to come into quite a bit of money out of this—what with the rewards offered for the dogs—probably more than I would have got by selling them. I 'm glad you are going to get it."

The figure of Schimmerhorn ambled quickly

off and was lost to Barry's view in a moment. He wondered how the big man could move so quietly when but a few moments before he had been lumbering awkwardly through the underbrush. Then he remembered that Schimmerhorn had been running blindly then to escape immediate pursuit, and was walking warily now.

He saw the policeman taking Albertini, Fawcett, and Fred to the house and decided there would be no more shooting. He ran toward the dog-shed and found Policeman McCar-r-rty opening a crate, Northway and Slip watching him.

"Is Tricks all right?" he demanded eagerly of the kneeling policeman.

"That he is, my boy," answered McCar-r-rty.

"Hello, Barry," cried Slip. "We got here just in the nick of time, did n't we?"

"Yes, Slip. They were getting ready to make a get-away and were going to take four of the dogs."

"And Tricks was one of them," observed Northway, putting his hand on Barry's shoulder. "It 's a fine piece of detective work you have done, Barry."

"That it is, Mr. Northway," observed Police-

man McCar-r-rty. "I 'm thinkin' of puttin' in a recommend to the chief that he hire Barry and Slip as detectives."

"Ah, quit your kiddin'," scoffed Slip, but there was a self-conscious smile of enjoyment on his face.

Policeman McCar-r-rty ripped off two boards from the crate in which Tricks had been caged, and the dog leaped forth and danced about Barry, giving Slip and Northway a caress or two as if by afterthought.

"And here 's Mr. Upson's Airedale," said the policeman. "And a fine collie. I wonder now if that can be the collie that was stolen from Mr. Ambrose out in Toledo? The papers was full of it a month or two ago. They offered two hundred dollars reward."

"Looks like the picture," observed Northway, "but all good collies look much alike in a newspaper cut."

"Did anything more happen after I left, Barry?" demanded Slip.

"Oh, not much," answered his friend. "I went back to the shed to talk to Tricks, and Fawcett and the boy captured me. And then Schimmerhorn tried to make me talk—and could n't, not much—and then he locked me up

in a room, and his daughter, Hilda, helped me to get out."

"'Oh, not much,' he calls it," laughed McCar-r-rty. "I 'd think it was a whole lot if all that had happened to me, a policeman, now. But when it happens to a boy who 's lost his dog it 's 'Oh, not much.' "

"Gee, it must a-been excitin'," Slip commented enviously. "I wisht I 'd been with you."

"It was awful lonesome out there in the woods in the dark, with Tricks locked up in the shed," was Barry's response, and, while no one else perhaps would have understood what was meant, Slip knew that Barry was saying: "I wish you had been with me, Slip. It would n't have been lonesome then."

"Let 's see what 's doing at the house," proposed Northway. "Maybe there 's a story there, too."

"You 're like all reporters," commented the policeman. "A story's more than meat and drink to you."

"Oh, but this is a corker," replied Northway. "It beats anything that 's happened here in my time. I 'll have a whale of a story in to-morrow's 'News,' with Barry and Slip as the heroes

and you as the fairy godmother who arrived just in the nick of time."

"How *did* you get here?" asked Barry. "You 're on day duty at the park."

"No, I 'm not," responded the giant policeman. "I 'm on night duty, attached to headquarters—for my sins."

The policeman liberated two other dogs that had been crated, and helped Northway examine half a dozen more in the shed, before they started for the house.

In the kitchen sat Fawcett, Albertini, and the boy, Fred, handcuffed, with two solemn-looking policemen guarding them. A third officer was questioning Mrs. Schimmerhorn in the doorway leading to an inner room.

Hilda was standing by her mother's side. Barry remembered her father's words and made a sly gesture toward the door with his head. The girl soon afterward left her mother and approached Barry.

"This is my dog, Tricks, Hilda. He can do all sorts of things. Want to see him play dead?"

"Yes," assented the girl, and her eyes seemed to burn into Barry's.

The boy took Tricks outside the kitchen door

and commanded him to play dead, Slip and Northway watching from the doorway.

"He 's escaped," Barry whispered in Hilda's ear as they bent over the shamming dog. "I let him go because you helped me out. He said to tell you he 'd gone to Phil's. Do you know where that is?"

"Yes, I know." Without waiting for the dog to come to life again, Hilda abruptly left Barry and returned to her mother.

Slip claimed Barry's attention, and he excitedly told the newsboy all that had happened after he left him. He was still narrating his experiences when a motor-car drew up with a policeman driving it. Barry was helped into it by his father, and Tricks placed at his feet. Slip sat on one side of him and his father on the other. Northway and McCar-r-rty rode in front with the driver.

All at once Barry found drowsiness overpowering him. He tried to keep awake long enough to ask how the other policemen were going to get back to town and what they were going to do with the rest of the dogs, but before he could frame the question he was asleep leaning against his father, one hand resting on the head of Tricks.

CHAPTER XVI

TRICKS IS CLAIMED BY HIS OLD MASTER

EXCITING days followed for Barry and for Slip in reading Paul Northway's account of the trailing of the band of dog-stealers by the two boys, of Barry's lonely vigil and imprisonment and escape while he waited for help to come, and of the raid and capture of the band—all except the leader, August Schimmerhorn, usually known as "Turk." The photograph of Barry and Slip with their heads together writing the advertisement for the return of Tricks was printed across three columns of the first page.

There was even more excitement when Slip one day discovered and followed a fat old peddler whose appearance and actions aroused his suspicions. He imparted his belief to Policeman McCar-r-rty with the result that the man was arrested and turned out to be "Turk" Schimmerhorn. He had been trying to communicate with Pete Albertini and Fawcett, pre-

sumably with the intention of aiding them to escape.

Barry was sorry, in a way, that Hilda's father had been captured, though recognizing that it was only just that he should be punished along with his fellow dog-stealers. But he remembered the look on Mrs. Schimmerhorn's face and the message she had sent him by Hilda; he was perplexed and touched by recollection of the confident, almost grown-up, manner in which Hilda had effected his release and by the difficulty she had experienced in asking him to have mercy on her father.

The stories that Paul Northway wrote about the case were sent broadcast over the country, and pictures of Barry and of Slip and of Tricks appeared in New York and Chicago and San Francisco newspapers as well as in many intervening cities. Barry received letters from men and women he had never even heard of, some of them describing lost dogs of their own and asking if they had been among those found on the Schimmerhorn farm. Others wrote in admiration of his bravery. One boy down in Texas sent a photograph of himself and his Newfoundland dog and asked for a picture of Barry and Tricks.

There also came a number of letters from persons who had lost Boston bulldogs and who thought Tricks was their missing pet, but Mr. Cayliss easily proved to them that they were mistaken.

But finally there came a letter that disquieted Barry's father. Into Barry's heart it struck cold terror. It was from a vaudeville actor in New York. Barry could not keep away from the letter. Half a dozen times a day he would go to the table drawer where his father had put it, get it out, and read it. And each time that he read it his heart contracted and gave a throb of pain, for he believed that letter. This man was telling the truth, he felt, even though he vehemently denied it to himself.

The letter read:

Dear Sir:

I have recognized in the newspaper pictures of the dog, Tricks, which your son found, lost, and recovered with such heroic devotion, the dog which I had trained and used in a vaudeville act in which my wife and I appeared for three years. Then the dog, Major by name, was stolen from our hotel in Cleveland while we were filling an engagement in that city.

I offered $100 reward for his return at that time

and the offer still holds good. Every trick that he performs, as narrated by your son to the newspaper men, I taught him. The descriptions of him tally perfectly. I will rest my claim to ownership upon Major himself. He will know both my wife and me. Also, I will put him through some new tricks not mentioned in the newspaper stories; first telling you what they are and just what the dog will do.

We will play the city of Judson the week of August 26 and will run over to see you on the morning of the 27th to prove my claim. I will bring $100 with me and pay it to your son as reward for the return of the dog, and an additional $50 for the care he has taken of him.

I wish you to understand that I know your son will be desolated at losing his pet so soon after recovering him, and that we deeply regret the necessity of parting them. But Major has helped us earn our bread and butter; I bought and trained him for that purpose. Since his loss, the earning capacity of our act has decreased $125 per week. I would like to make a gift of the dog to Barry, but I cannot afford to do so. We are just as attached to Major as your son is to Tricks.

With my compliments on having such a plucky son, I am

Very truly yours,
NICHOLAS BURTON.

Mrs. Cayliss was grieved at the frequent fits of depression that came over Barry, and when she learned the cause she hid the letter.

The twenty-seventh of August was ten days off, and Barry recovered a part of his usual cheerfulness, but as the arrival of the vaudeville actor came nearer and nearer the boy's face became set and glum. He would disappear from home early in the day, taking Tricks with him, and sometimes he would not return until dark. Often he would hunt up Slip, and they would romp and play with Tricks as they used to on their expeditions into the country. But most of the time Barry preferred to be alone with his four-footed playmate.

It was no unusual sight for a farmer driving along a country road to see a boy seated on a rock, resting his chin in his hands and with a dog's head lying in his lap. Sometimes they would remain in that position, virtually motionless, for half an hour. Then Barry would stand up, and Tricks would frolic away and bark at him from a distance, inviting him to play, and when his advances were repulsed would run back to his master and circle playfully around him.

At times Barry responded to the dog's invitation, and they had a glorious romp; but more often he walked morosely on and would throw himself down on the ground under a tree, while Tricks, flat on the grass also, his muzzle resting on his fore paws, patiently waited for his master to arouse himself.

Ethel watched her brother with sharp eyes. There had been a feeling of restraint and uneasiness between them ever since the loss of Tricks. It had not been entirely dissipated by the recovery of the dog and Ethel's whole-souled admiration for her brother's exploit. She had made timid advances, which Barry never seemed to notice, so absorbed was he in Tricks. What was going on in Ethel's sharp little brain, Barry did not know nor care, but as the day for Mr. Burton's arrival approached she showed her sympathy by many little sisterly attentions. She gave him her share of gingerbread and apple-pie and other desserts of which he was very fond.

Only once did she venture to speak with him about the approaching visit of the vaudeville actor.

"You can buy yourself another dog, Barry," she suggested timidly. "With all the reward

money you are going to get, Father said you could buy the best trick dog in the country."

"I don't want another trick dog. I never want to see a trick dog again," replied Barry without even looking up from the floor.

"I— Oh, Barry— Maybe Tricks won't know the man. He said he'd leave it to Tricks whether he belonged to him or not."

Barry cheered up a little at her words and Ethel continued eagerly: "The other men who thought he was their dog were mistaken. They had to admit they were."

"Yes, I should guess they did have to own up they were mistaken."

"So 'll he have to, too, Barry. Mr. Burton, I mean."

"He 's different from the others, Ethel."

"How 's he different, I 'd like to know?"

"He said . . . he 'd make Tricks perform some new stunts—new to us, I mean; they 're old stunts that he taught him—and first he 'll tell us just what he 's going to have him do and how he 'll do it."

"Why don't you run away with Tricks the day that man is to come?"

"I had thought of that, Ethel, but he 'd keep coming back for Tricks until he did find

him. If Tricks is his dog, I 'd have to give him up."

"Why would you? If he means so much to you and he would rather stay with you?"

"It would n't be right for me to keep Tricks if he 's Major and belongs to Mr. Burton."

"No, I s'pose not. But neither is it right for you to have to give him up after you 've had him a year and got him back from the dog-stealers."

"I guess—life 's kind of funny that way—sometimes."

Mr. and Mrs. Cayliss were very considerate and very kind to Barry during those days of suffering, but they let him fight it out alone. They could not make the parting with Tricks, if such it turned out to be, any easier by their words and would only keep their son's mind in a turmoil, and so they said nothing.

On the fateful twenty-seventh of August, which was on Monday, Barry, more silent than ever, ate breakfast without once looking up. As soon as that was finished he called:

"Here, Tricks, here!"

His playfellow came bounding in with a joyful yelp, ready for a jaunt or a lark with his master.

"You won't be gone very long, Barry?" questioned his mother.

"No, Mother. Just for—just to— Here, Tricks!"

Boy and dog had disappeared through the door, but there came no sound of whistling. Mrs. Cayliss watched her son from the doorway, while Ethel peered out from an upstairs window. Their hearts were very sore for him.

It was perhaps an hour later that boy and dog wandered back to the house, subdued and sad. Barry sat on the front door-steps, facing the gate; Tricks sat on the ground at his feet, watching for a change of mood on the set face of the boy.

A low whistle, as of some one calling a dog, aroused Barry from his lethargy of grief. He looked at Tricks and found his ears pointed, head lifted, his tail wagging a second or two, then stopping, then continuing. The whistle was repeated, and Barry turned his eyes to the street.

Coming along the sidewalk were a man and woman, and the man was whistling to Tricks!

It was the vaudeville actor and his wife come to claim their dog!

Tricks gave an indecisive bark and rose on all fours, his eyes fixed on the approaching couple.

"Here, Major, here!" called the man, and whistled again.

Tricks bounded away to the gate just as Barry called, "Here, Tricks, here!"

But Tricks did not return at his call, did not even look back. He leaped at the gate, whining in his eagerness to get through; his tail wagged so convulsively with excitement that his entire body quivered.

The man opened the gate and Barry stood up. Tricks was Major, Mr. Burton's dog!

Barry had no longer any shadow of a doubt of that, for Tricks leaped up at the man, barking joyously, caressing his hands, rubbing against him. The woman spoke to him.

"Have n't you a word for me, Major, after three years?"

And, like the gentleman that he was, Tricks kissed the cheek that she leaned over to him as she patted his head.

Barry felt a lump rise in his throat and keep rising and swelling and rising. And his eyes hurt and got hot, and he wanted to run away and cry his grief out in his mother's

arms—or hide away all by himself. He was half blinded.

"Oh, Nicholas! Look!" he heard the woman cry to her husband, and there was pity in her voice and a little catch in it that made Barry feel suddenly weak in the knees. He sat down on the step again and looked at the woman. She was gazing at him, trying to smile, but it seemed to Barry that the curve of her lips was nearer a sob than a smile.

Mrs. Burton came toward Barry and, it seemed unconsciously on her part, both her arms were extended toward him. He did not trust himself even to stand; he just looked up into her face, and she let her arms fall back to her side.

"It is even crueler than I thought, Nicholas," she grieved, turning to the man who advanced, Tricks—no, Major—walking at his side. The dog advanced proudly straight up to Barry, stopped, and looked back at his old master: it was as if he was introducing them with the greatest certainty that they would be the best of friends.

"I am Nicholas Burton," said the man to the boy. "You are Barry Cayliss, are n't you?"

"Y-y-yes." Barry had to moisten his lips

before that troublesome word would form itself.

"I wrote your father that—" Mr. Burton came to a full stop, a certain shyness seeming to come over him.

"Mothen will t-t-tele—" Barry began, but he, too, failed to finish his sentence. Instead he got up and ran into the house.

Mrs. Cayliss invited the players in and telephoned to Mr. Cayliss, while Barry sat on the sofa and tried to repress his feelings.

Tricks walked over to Barry, as if troubled, and put his cold, moist muzzle into the boy's hand. The dog remained there, his body against Barry's leg, facing his old master. His tail would give a little wag when Mr. Burton looked at him, but it would soon grow quiet. Barry felt that Tricks understood just how he felt, if he was not actually sharing his grief at the coming separation.

It was an uncomfortable twenty minutes to all of them that they spent there in the room waiting for Mr. Cayliss to arrive. Ethel wandered in two or three times as though she could not keep out and looked miserably at Barry. And then she would go away as though she could not bear to remain.

They were all glad when they heard Mr. Cayliss's rapid step on the sidewalk. They arose as he opened the door and entered. Mr. Cayliss looked first at Barry and the dog and then turned his attention to the callers, whom his wife named.

"The dog has grown to mean so much to my son," he remarked to the actor and his wife, "and so many false claims have been advanced that you will excuse me for asking a very definite and decided proof."

"Certainly, Mr. Cayliss. We want you to be thoroughly satisfied."

"Father," said Barry. "Father—"

Mr. Cayliss went to Barry and placed a hand firmly on his shoulder.

"Yes, Barry. What is it?"

"Tricks is his dog, all right. He knew his whistle when he was out on the sidewalk. He ran to him and acted just as he did when Mr. Schimmerhorn put me in the shed with Tricks." What matter that Barry's pronouns were inextricably mixed? Every one in the room knew what he meant.

"You 're a brave boy, my son," observed Mr. Cayliss.

"Indeed he is!" exclaimed Mrs. Burton.

"He—I— We feel guilty at—" She stopped.

"It is more difficult than we thought it would be," observed her husband. "We knew the boy must love Major, but this—" He waved one hand lamely and stopped speaking.

"From what Barry tells me, the dog has proved your claim to his satisfaction. You will pardon me if I ask you for a more difficult test."

"Certainly, Mr. Cayliss. I have come prepared. Here is a photograph of myself, my wife, and the dog, Major, taken four years ago—the date is on the photo—by Thurston in New York."

He took from his pocket three photographs and passed one to Mr. Cayliss, who looked at it silently, and then handed it to his wife. She took it to Barry.

"That 's Tricks," sighed Barry.

"Now, Mr. Cayliss, I am going to have Major perform a trick that I had him do at every performance in vaudeville. So that I need not mention beforehand any words that will indicate what is expected of him, or the commands, I will show you this illustration of the stunt, when it is completed."

Barry was interested in this new accomplish-

ment on the part of his playmate which was to be revealed and waited eagerly for the photograph to come into his hands. It showed the dog with his master's hat on his head, a pair of large horn spectacles resting on his nose and a pipe in his mouth.

When they had all looked at the photograph, including the restless and wandering Ethel, who glided forlornly into the room again, Mr. Burton clapped his hands suddenly and loudly twice.

"Major, my hat!"

Tricks rose immediately, went to the table on which Mr. Burton had laid his hat, took the brim between his teeth, and carried it to his old master.

"Do you want your pipe?"

The dog barked twice. The actor took a large brier pipe from his coat pocket and held it in his hand, bowl to the dog. Tricks barked loudly half a dozen times and refused to take the pipe.

"I beg your pardon," said Mr. Burton. "You 're afraid the bowl might burn your mouth. Here 's the stem."

He turned the pipe in his hand, with the stem extended toward the dog. Tricks rose

on his hind legs and took the stem in his mouth, letting the bowl hang down just as a pipe-smoker does.

The actor clapped his hands twice again.

"Major! Your hat!"

Tricks dropped on all fours, hanging his head as if ashamed or asking pardon for his stupidity. Then he thrust his head into the hat and rose, first on all four feet, then on his hind legs, balancing the hat on his nose and the top of his head. The pipe still hung from his mouth.

"I 'm afraid you can't see, Major. Do you want your spectacles?"

Tricks barked twice, dropping the pipe.

"Or would you rather have a monocle?"

Tricks barked sharply half a dozen times.

"All right, your spectacles; right?"

Two barks again, and then the actor drew from his coat pocket a large pair of horn-rimmed spectacles and adjusted them over the dog's head. He arranged the hat so that Tricks could see underneath the brim, then picked up the pipe and offered it to the dog.

"Shake hands with the lady."

Tricks walked over to the actor's wife, fore paws raised, and offered the right one to her.

"Down!" came the command.

Tricks quickly lowered his head so that hat, spectacles, and pipe remained on the floor, while the dog reared up on his hind feet again, crossed his fore paws, and laid his head on them.

"Good dog, Major!" The actor patted his head, and Tricks dropped down on all fours. "Not a perfect performance, by any means, Mr. Cayliss, but remember it has been two years since he last did the trick."

"It seems perfect enough to me," observed Mr. Cayliss.

"It's wonderful!" breathed Barry, pride in the dog overcoming for the moment every other consideration.

"I am satisfied that Tricks is yours," continued Mr. Cayliss. "Barry will grieve for him; we 'll all miss him; but— Well, he is yours. Take him. Barry, I want you to come with me for the rest of the day. I 've got to go over to Minturn by motor."

"Yes, Father."

"Just a moment, please, Mr. Cayliss. My offer of a hundred dollars reward for the return of the dog has never been withdrawn. Barry is entitled to that and also fifty dollars

for taking such good care of Major. I brought the money with me. Here it is."

"All right, I 'll put it in the bank to Barry's credit." Mr. Cayliss turned to his son. "Barry, get your hat."

The boy returned in a moment.

"Now, tell Tricks good-by and come with me."

Barry knelt on the floor, threw his arms about Tricks's neck, and rubbed his cheek against the furry head raised to his. He hugged the dog tight, hiding his eyes against his neck a moment, then, desolation in his heart, jumped up and ran blindly from the room, bumping into his father.

Past the doorway, he turned for a last look and saw the actor blowing his nose violently, while his wife held a handkerchief to her eyes.

Then Barry grasped his father's hand and clung tightly to it.

CHAPTER XVII

EIGHT HUNDRED DOLLARS REWARD

WHEN Barry and his father returned home that night, Tricks was gone. Nothing was said about him by any one. The next morning Barry noticed that the kennel by the garage had been removed. He did not ask where, nor did his parents volunteer any information on the point. They were all very gentle and patient with him.

Ethel was hushed and sympathetic. Barry felt that she would like to talk about Tricks and would do so if he gave her the slightest opportunity. To avoid doing that, even indirectly, he sought out Slip Halloran at the drug-store and delivered packages for him or helped him sell his papers. Sometimes he received a dime or a quarter from the druggist, but he would never keep any of the money, insisting on turning it over to Slip.

"Give it to your mother, then," was his reply

to Slip's repeated objections. Mrs. Halloran never neglected to thank him for his slight contributions to her scanty exchequer, and whenever he could be coaxed to stay to supper she would bake some ginger-cookies for him. Barry was devoted to ginger-cookies and always praised Mrs. Halloran's efforts extravagantly.

Tricks was not mentioned at these times, Mrs. Halloran having strictly forbidden any of the children to do so. But when Barry and Slip were out in the fields alone on a Sunday afternoon and Barry would sit silently brooding on a stump or a rock, Slip would begin, knowing that Barry was waiting for it:

"Do you remember how Tricks would pick up a stick for us to throw so he could run after it?" or, "Tricks never wanted us to sit still so long an' do nothin'."

"I wonder where he is now?"

"Going through his tricks in some theater, I s'pose."

"I 'd like to go to a theater and see him come out and pretend to smoke a pipe."

"Gee, so 'd I, Barry. Maybe Mr. Burton 'll come here some time an' we can go up in the gallery an' watch."

"I wish he'd come next week—or very soon."

"It would be grand to see him up there on the stage playin' dead or any of the things he can do. Would you whistle to him, Barry, if you was to see him in a theater?"

"Maybe, Slip. No, I guess not. That might take his mind off what he was doing so he'd forget part of a trick."

"Yes, it might. I never 'd a thought of that. What *would* you do?"

"Maybe I 'd go around to the stage-door and ask the man there to tell Mr. Burton that Barry Cayliss would like to see Tricks—I mean Major."

"S'pose he 'd let you?"

"Yes. Mr. Burton 's all right. He 'd like to have me see him for a little while."

"Gee, maybe he 'd let you take him home part of the time."

Longing came into Barry's eyes. Then regret.

"No, I don't s'pose he 'd let me do that. Tricks might get lost again—or stolen or something, and then he 'd be out a hundred and twenty-five dollars a week once more."

"Do you s'pose we 'll ever make that much

money, Barry—a hundred and twenty-five dollars a week?"

"*I* will some day. And I 'm going to give you half of it."

"Maybe your wife would n't let you."

"I would n't get married, then, if she would n't. What are you going to do with your share of the rewards, Slip?"

"Give it to Mother. How much do you s'pose it 'll be?"

"Oh, I don't know. Half of it. Maybe four or five hundred dollars."

"Half of it to *me,* Barry? Why, you did 'most all of the work trailin' the dog-stealers an' findin' Tricks."

"You did as much as I did. Besides, you and me are friends."

"That 's a lot of money—four or five hundred dollars."

"Maybe you could buy a house for your mother near us."

"A house costs lots more 'n that, Barry. I guess four or five times as much."

"When do you s'pose we 'll get the money?"

"Not till after the trial, Mr. Northway says. If Turk Schimmerhorn an' his gang are sent

up the reward 'll be bigger than if the dogs was just found."

"Does it—make you sort of afraid, Slip, getting up before a whole court-house full of people to tell about shadowing their leader?"

Slip snorted disdainfully.

"Naw, Barry. That 's nothin'. It 's easy."

"With so many people looking at you?"

"Don't think about them, if it makes you feel so— How *does* it make you feel?"

"Kind of sinking in my stomach, Slip—as though I was in an elevator that shot clear down to the first floor without stopping."

Slip was at once all sympathy.

"Gee, that 's bad, Barry. I know how that feels. You don't haf to look at the people. I 'll get right up in the front row an' you can look at me all the time, except when you haf to look at the lawyers answerin' their questions."

"You be sure to get right in the first row of seats, Slip."

"Sure. Mr. Northway 'll fix that up all right."

A silence fell between the two boys. Slip waited patiently for Barry to speak, for he

could tell that there was something on his friend's mind. At last it came out.

"Do you have to tell *everything* when they put you up on the witness-stand, Slip?"

"You haf to answer the questions an' tell the truth."

"If they don't ask you, you don't have to tell?"

"No, but if it 's somethin' about the dog-stealers you'd better tell it."

"Slip, I—"

"Yes, Barry."

"I let Turk Schimmerhorn get away."

"You *what?*" cried Slip, sitting up erect.

"I saw him running away after the light in the shed was put out. I could have yelled, and the police would have got him."

"Why did you let him go?"

"Because . . . Mrs. Schimmerhorn and their little girl, Hilda, put a ladder up to the window of the room where I was locked up, and Hilda helped me get out."

"Why, Barry, that 's as excitin' as a . . . a ball-game!"

"She asked me— She said her mother told her to ask me not to send Mr. Schimmerhorn to prison, and I promised her I would n't

if I got Tricks back. And I 've got—I *did* get him back for a while, and so I let her father escape. And I told him I hoped he 'd get away."

"You *talked* with him!" thrilled Slip. "After he 'd smashed the lantern in the shed an' run away from the police?"

"Yes, Slip. If they ask me about him and I answer truthfully will it be the same as sending him to prison?"

Slip deliberated a long time before replying to that question.

"I guess it would, Barry. You 'd haf to tell the truth. It 's purgajury to tell a lie in court, an' they could send you to jail."

"But if I tell the truth I 'll tell a lie—I mean, if I tell the truth about Mr. Schimmerhorn escaping it 'll make me break my promise to Hilda, and that 'll be a lie."

"Yes, that would be a lie, Barry."

"What 'll I do?"

"I don't know. You 'd better tell your father or Mr. Northway. Maybe the lawyer won't ask you about that if they was to ask him not to."

Barry had good cause for the uneasiness and melancholy that settled down over him with

the beginning of school. The dread of being questioned on the witness-stand, together with his grief at the loss of Tricks, preyed on his mind to such extent that he lost his appetite and began to grow thin. His parents worried about him. His mother suggested sending him to his Uncle Henry's in Michigan for a month, but Mr. Cayliss pointed out that Barry was the prosecution's most important witness and that he must stay within the jurisdiction of the court.

Two days before the trial was to come up, Paul Northway called at the Cayliss home early in the evening, and it was only then that Barry's father learned that his son was worried about something aside from the loss of his dog. Barry had at length confided in the reporter, who had assured him that Turk Schimmerhorn would be convicted anyway, even if Barry did not testify at the trial at all, and that Slip's testimony and the facts discovered by the police were enough to "send him up" for two or three years. For a time Barry had satisfied his conscience with Northway's statement, but only for a time. He was sure that if he testified he would help convict Hilda's father and send him to prison when he

had promised that he would not provided he got Tricks back.

"There won't be any trial of the Schimmerhorn case," Northway now announced as he entered the room.

"Has he pleaded guilty?" asked Mr. Cayliss.

"Yes, he agreed this afternoon to plead guilty upon the county attorney's promise of a fine and a light prison sentence. The evidence is too strong."

"Then I won't have to get up before a whole court-house full of people and tell about finding Tricks?" Barry asked eagerly.

"No, Barry," responded the reporter, "you won't have to tell anything."

"And I won't have to break my promise to —Mrs.—" He did not finish what was in his mind.

"No, Barry, your promise need never be broken now."

"What promise are you talking about, Barry?" asked his father.

The boy hesitated, and Northway gave his shoulder an encouraging pat.

"Tell your father, Barry. Or would you rather have me tell him?"

"You tell him, Mr. Northway."

"You see, Mr. Cayliss, when we were all in the shed, and Turk Schimmerhorn got away, Barry saw him and talked with him but did not give an alarm. He let him get away—"

"Let the ringleader get away?" repeated Mr. Cayliss in astonishment.

"Yes," smiled the reporter, "I think he told Turk he hoped he would n't be caught. Was n't that it, Barry?"

"Yes, Mr. Northway."

"I can understand why he might be too frightened at the man's sudden appearance to give an alarm," said Mr. Cayliss, "but I can't understand why he should tell him he hoped he would get away when he had stolen Tricks and was going to ship him off and sell him."

"But, Father, I promised—" Barry began.

"Yes, it was a promise, Mr. Cayliss. Schimmerhorn locked Barry in the room, and the man's little daughter, with the knowledge if not the actual aid of her mother, let Barry out. The girl asked Barry not to send her father to prison, and Barry promised he would n't."

"If I got Tricks back," Barry hastily inter-

posed. "And I did get Tricks back—from the dog-stealers."

"Why, Barry," said his father, "is that what has been troubling you so much? You did n't want to go on the witness-stand and tell about finding the dog at Schimmerhorn's place because you had promised you would n't send him to prison?"

"It would have been a lie," stammered Barry, becoming confused under the searching glance in his father's eyes.

"But why did n't you tell *me,* my son? I might have been able to help you straighten out just what your duty was in the circumstances."

"Hilda said her mother wanted me to promise not to send her father—Hilda's father, Mr. Schimmerhorn, I mean—to prison. And after they had just set me free I could n't any more than promise—if I got Tricks back. And I did."

"No one can blame you for that promise, Barry, but you would have been obliged to tell the jury if the case had come to trial. Besides, I think you fulfilled your promise when you let Schimmerhorn escape from the police. I am glad for your sake that there will be no trial since the villains get punished and the

heroes get the reward. By the way, Northway, is n't the 'News' about ready to come across with the reward of eight hundred dollars it has been offering?"

Northway laughed contentedly.

"It is quite ready, sir. It has sent the money out by me in eight one-hundred dollar bills—at my request. Now the question is: How much of it goes to Barry and how much to Slip Halloran? They both had a hand in—"

"Half of it goes to Slip." Barry spoke up quickly and firmly.

"Half?" questioned Northway, with a quick, eager smile at Barry. "You don't have to give him that much, you know. You started the ball rolling which landed Turk Schimmerhorn and his gang in the calaboose; and you gave it the final push, too."

"Me and Slip are friends," asserted Barry. "He gets half of the money."

"That 's quite right, my son." Mr. Cayliss spoke decisively. "That 's the way a man should treat his friend. But what about you, Northway? You deserve a share in the reward for the way you have handled the case."

"He can have part of mine, father, and

Slip's, too. I want him to, and I know Slip will—"

"No, Barry," interrupted Northway, "employees of the 'News' were barred from getting the reward, but I 've got a bigger reward out of it, Mr. Cayliss. Just what I have been wanting." Northway's eyes were bright and his voice eager.

"I *am* glad," smiled Mr. Cayliss. "A promotion on the 'News'? You certainly ought to have it."

"It 's not that, though I was offered more money. It 's a job with the 'Chicago Courier' at twice the money I 've been getting. There 'll be big stories for me to write there, and Barry and Slip and Tricks have made it possible for me to get there while I 'm still young enough to profit by the experience."

Barry added his shy congratulations to his father's.

"I 'm glad, but what 'll Slip do—and me, without you?"

"Oh, I 'll be back to the old burg occasionally, and I 'll look you and Slip up if I don't see another soul in town. Now, Barry, you sign for the four hundred dollars that 's coming to

you, and I 'll take the other four hundred to Slip."

"Let me take it to him, Mr. Northway, please."

"Sure, Barry. Come along with me. You can carry the money and give it to Slip—if your father does n't mind."

"I should like to have him do it."

Northway took an envelope from his inner coat pocket and pulled out some yellow-backed bills, counted off four, and gave them to Barry.

"Is one of them really worth a hundred dollars?" asked Barry, for he had never seen anything bigger than a ten-dollar bill before.

"Any bank in the land will give you a hundred dollar-bills for it, or a hundred silver dollars."

"Here, you keep them for me, Father. I 'd be afraid to have one of them on me for fear I 'd be held up or lose it or something."

"I 'll put it with the savings-bank account that I opened in your name with the hundred and fifty dollars from Mr. Burton," said Mr. Cayliss.

Barry signed for the four hundred dollars and eagerly set forth with the reporter to find

Slip. They went to his home first, and Mrs. Halloran said she expected him any minute. They waited, and Barry fidgeted about uneasily; it was hard to wait to tell the good news. Ten minutes later Slip sauntered carelessly in.

"Hello, Barry. Hello, Mr. Northway. What 's the row?"

"Oh, we thought we would look you up," was the reporter's greeting.

"Here, Slip, we brought you this," and Barry, too excited to wait any longer, drew the four one-hundred-dollar bills out of the envelope and thrust them into Slip's hands.

"A hundred-dollar bill!" cried Slip. "What 's it for? Is it my share of the reward?"

"Part of it," grinned Barry happily.

"What 's that!" exclaimed Mrs. Halloran. "A hundred-dollar bill, and what would my Jackie be after doing with a hundred dollars?"

"There are four of 'em!" cried Slip, his eyes getting bigger and rounder.

"Yes, Slip, it 's four hundred dollars, your share of the reward offered through the 'News' for the capture of the band of dog-stealers."

"Jiminy Christmas, Barry! You ought n't to give all that money to me. I know you said you would, but—"

"I said I would, and I have," replied Barry. "Father said it was right to give you half."

"Four hundred dollars to my Jack for helpin' to run down them ugly men as would steal a boy's dog away from him!" gasped Mrs. Halloran. "Mercy to goodness, are all the dogs in the world worth that much money?"

"Yes, and more," laughed the reporter. "Barry and Slip will come in for some more rewards offered for three or four of the dogs that were stolen in other States and sent on here for disposal—maybe three or four hundred dollars more."

"Sure, Jackie, and you 'll be after becomin' one of them millionaire-camels that can't pass through the eye of a needle."

"Not me, Mother. It 's all for you. Now we—you can pay the rent for the last three months and buy yourself a black dress like the one Mrs. O'Flaherty wore at the sociable you told me about."

"It 's some new clothes you 'll be after havin', Jackie, and Jimmie and Ada and Dennis and

Moyna, too, and maybe a bit more of the schoolin'."

"Slip, you sign your name here on this bit of paper, right under Barry's, so I 'll have something to show that I 've turned the money over to you," requested Northway. "I've got a seven-o'clock assignment to-night."

Slip, as much dazed as Barry had been, and looking to his friend for support, signed his name. Northway and Barry then hurried away, leaving the newsboy speechless.

"It 's the generous heart you be after havin', Barry," cried Mrs. Halloran after them. "If the prayers from a widow woman's heart are answered you 'll be after missing none of the glory and splendor of life."

CHAPTER XVIII

"HERE, TRICKS, HERE!"

SIX weeks had passed since the vaudeville performer and his wife took Tricks away with them, and Barry had become accustomed to his loss though by no means resigned to it. He had refused his father's offers to buy him a puppy of any breed, perhaps with a vague feeling that it would be treason to Tricks, and anyway there could never be another pet like that dog of delight.

Barry said little about the dog. He was faithful in his studies but less talkative and social than was his wont. He was sitting on the front steps thinking of the day that he and Ethel had discovered Tricks in the park when a sudden joyful bark in a well known and longed-for canine voice aroused him from his meditation.

It was Tricks's bark!

Barry jumped up and rubbed his eyes. Com-

ing along the walk were Mr. Burton, the actor, and his wife, and there, running ahead and barking at the gate, was Tricks!

A thrill ran over Barry, and he found himself suddenly warm.

"Tricks!" he cried in a stifled voice.

The dog barked joyously and tried to jump over the fence.

Barry ran and flung open the gate and knelt as Tricks sprang up at him. The result was that the boy was overbalanced and fell on the sidewalk, Tricks clasped in his arms. The delight of the dog knew no bounds; he caressed Barry's face and neck and hands, his stump of a tail wagging as though it would wag itself off, whimpering his delight at the reunion.

"He was just pining for the boy," Barry heard Mrs. Burton's voice saying, and he glanced up to find the actor and his wife looking kindly down at him.

Barry got up on his knees and held out one hand to grasp the trim, gloved hand that Mrs. Burton extended to him. One arm remained about the dog's neck.

"Well, Barry," smiled the actor, "you convince me that you 're about as glad to see Major—Tricks—as he is to see you."

"Oh, I *am!*" beamed Barry. "I 've wanted him so it—"

"He 's wanted you the same way, Barry," said Mrs. Burton. "He simply pined for you."

"He did n't go through his tricks with the old precision and spirit," added Mr. Burton. "So, as we are playing Middleton—"

"We thought we 'd bring Tricks over to see you," interrupted his wife, "and give you a surprise."

"I was surprised all right when I heard him bark," observed Barry, laying his face against the dog's neck.

"Major knew he was coming to you when we got off the car," continued Mr. Burton. "He tried to hurry us along. He was too much of a thoroughbred to run away and leave us, as he really wanted to do—"

"Oh, do you think he really wanted to see me like that?" asked Barry wistfully.

"Yes, I really do, Barry. He 'd run ahead and bark and stop and wait for us. He 's been very nice to us during the six weeks we 've had him back, but he 's not satisfied with the old life any more."

"Would you like very much to have Tricks again?" questioned Mrs. Burton, who seemed

to have fallen into the habit of using Barry's name for the dog.

"I— Do you mean—" For very eagerness, Barry could not utter the words that came tumbling up to the tip of his tongue.

"We are going to let Major decide," Mr. Burton said. "My wife and I are leaving vaudeville. We've had a very good offer to go back into the legitimate, in a play that's a big hit, and there we won't need the dog. We may never use him on the stage again."

"And after a while we'll be on the road," Mrs. Burton explained to Barry, "and it's hard enough taking a dog about the country with you when he is a part of an act."

"And—and you're going to leave him with me?"

"Yes, if you and Major both want it that way," replied the actor. "There are your mother and sister at the window. Mrs. Cayliss won't object to your having the dog again, will she, if he chooses to remain with you?"

"She'll be *glad!*" cried Barry, and turned and ran into the house, Tricks at his heels.

Mrs. Cayliss met her son in the hallway, her face beaming at his delight.

"Have they brought him back to you?" asked

Ethel. "I hope they have. You 've changed so."

"Yes, if Tricks chooses to stay," answered Barry breathlessly.

"How can Tricks decide if he 's going to stay or not?"

"I don't know. That 's what Mr. Burton said. He 's going to leave vaudeville, he says, and act in a play where he won't need a trick dog, and they don't want to take him about the country with them when they travel."

Mrs. Cayliss met the actor and his wife at the door, while Tricks went up to Ethel, stood on his hind feet, rested his paws on her arm, and looked gravely into her eyes.

"Tricks, nice dog," observed Ethel sedately, patting his head. Tricks gave her hand a warm, moist caress and, as if satisfied that peace reigned between them, returned to Barry, after a brief greeting of Mrs. Cayliss.

Mr. Burton explained to Mrs. Cayliss that Major had been pining miserably for Barry and that he was no longer so dependable on the stage.

"And as we are leaving vaudeville for the legitimate," broke in Mrs. Burton, "we thought

we 'd bring him back here and see if he wants to stay."

"The truth is, Mrs. Cayliss, my wife has been haunted by the grief in Barry's face and voice when he said good-by to Major, and she 's been regretting all the time that we ever took the dog away."

"It 's not that we do not want him," interjected Mrs. Burton, "but we know Barry wants him far more than we do. Ethel's letter would have convinced us of that even if we had not known it already."

"Ethel's letter!" exclaimed Barry and Mrs. Cayliss in the same breath.

"Yes. Ethel wrote telling us how much Barry missed Tricks. She told us all about her jealousy of the dog—and her repentance. And we have come to feel that Tricks will be happier with him than with us."

"I know you 're trying to disguise the kindly feeling that has brought you back with the dog," Barry heard his mother saying in a peculiar tone of voice, as though she could cry without any effort. "I want you to know that I understand and thank you."

"How proud you must be of Barry, Mrs.

Cayliss," the actress replied. "If I 'd ever had a son I should have wanted him to be like Barry."

Mrs. Cayliss invited the players to remain for luncheon, but they refused, stating that they must catch the next train back to Middleton to be in time for the matinée.

"It is n't much easier for me to part with Major than it is for Barry to part with Tricks," explained Mr. Burton, "and I want to get it over with definitely before we leave."

"Barry said you were going to let the dog decide, Mr. Burton. How do you intend to do it?"

"My wife and I will leave and call the dog—"

"I won't, Nicholas. I won't call him once."

"I 'll call Major and Barry is to call Tricks. Whichever one he goes to and stays with is to keep him. Is that fair, Barry?"

"Yes, sir; it 's fair," Barry agreed, but inwardly he trembled at what seemed to him the probability—almost certainty—that Tricks would follow his old master, the man who had had him so long and trained him so patiently and kindly. Tricks had been with Barry but a year, and Ethel had been jealous of him and

not paid much attention to him, whereas Mrs. Burton liked the dog. He thought Tricks must be as devoted to her as he was to her husband.

"The odds are not so strong against you," whispered Mrs. Burton. "Cheer up."

Barry did cheer up at her words and at the smile that played hide-and-seek about her mouth and at the twinkle in her eyes.

"Where shall we go for the test?" asked the actor. "Right here in front of your house?"

"Let 's go to the park," responded Barry instantly, without understanding why he chose the park. But deep within him was the instinct to be alone with his sorrow if Tricks should follow after his old master, and to be alone with Tricks and his joy if the dog remained with his new master.

The Burtons bade Mrs. Cayliss and Ethel good-by and were soon in a street-car with Barry and Tricks en route to the park. Mrs. Burton did not accompany them into the park, but remained on the car, which would take her to the railway station.

She patted Tricks's head affectionately and shook hands warmly with Barry just before they got up to alight from the car.

"We 're coming to see you—and Tricks—whenever we are out in this part of the State," she whispered in his ear.

Her words sent a glow of hope surging through Barry's body. She had said they were coming to see him—and Tricks! Then she must believe that Tricks was going to choose to remain with him!

Confidence began to return to Barry as they walked into the park. He showed Mr. Burton where he had first seen Tricks and told him how the dog played dead and what a time he and Ethel had in finding the right command to bring him back to life.

"I can see you are just the boy to have a dog like Major," observed the actor. "You appreciate him and are kind to him. You 'd always be kind to him, even when he 's old and toothless?"

"Oh, I would, Mr. Burton!"

"Yes, I think you would. This is a good place to put the matter to the test. Here, Major!"

The dog trotted obediently to his old master's side and looked brightly up into his face, cocking his head a little to one side. The actor took the dog's muzzle into both hands, moving his

thumbs slowly over the top of the animal's head.

"If you choose Barry, good-by, old fellow."

Barry noticed the man's lips set in a thin straight line and understood suddenly that this man *did* like Tricks just as much as he did and that he was saying good-by in earnest.

"Shake hands with me, Barry. Maybe we 'll see each other in the future."

Gravely they shook hands.

"Now, let 's stand back to back and start and walk a few rods apart; you go even with that bench, and I 'll go to the oak-tree. Then we 'll both stop and call the dog. Either of us can call him as long as we can see each other, not afterwards. Is that satisfactory?"

"Yes, Mr. Burton."

Barry turned his back on Mr. Burton, and as he did so felt the man's hand press his shoulder firmly for an instant. Then they both started walking. Barry found himself possessed by the desire to run to the bench so that he could call the dog before the actor did, but that would be unfair, and he forced himself to walk slowly. He was tempted to look over his shoulder to see if Mr. Burton had reached the tree, but he would not yield until he came up

even with the bench. When he turned the actor was standing by the tree looking back at him.

Tricks, midway between them, was plainly very much puzzled. He glanced first at one and then at the other, then squatted down on the ground as if to make up his mind which one to follow.

Mr. Burton waved to Barry. Then he placed his hands to his mouth and shouted:

"Call him. You first."

A little, cold shudder ran over Barry's body.

"Here, Tricks, here!" he called, and repeated the call.

Tricks bounded up at the summons and started toward him.

A shrill whistle sounded.

"Here, Major! To heel!"

The dog stopped dead in his tracks, and Barry's heart began to sink.

"Here, Tricks, here!" he repeated his call. The opposing summonses were heard again and again.

The puzzled dog would trot a short distance in one direction and then, as his other master called, trot back in the opposite direction.

Mr. Burton began walking rapidly away

from Barry and called the dog again in a loud voice. Barry tried to walk on past the bench, but something held him rooted to the spot. He could not move.

Tricks, seeing his old master about to disappear behind some bushes and trees, started to run after him.

The chill of despair that settled over Barry seemed to numb his brain, and he found himself running after Tricks, forgetful of the fact that he and Mr. Burton had agreed to continue in opposite directions. But remembrance of that agreement soon came back, and he stopped and turned backward, crying out with bitter, sobbing breath:

"Here, Tricks, here! Here, Tricks, here!"

Tears blinded his eyes. He found himself again at the bench and flung himself down upon it. He did not dare to look up and see Tricks following at Mr. Burton's heels, quite out of his life. Twice he had lost that most wonderful of dogs. To lose him a third time was more than he could bear.

He was startled at feeling something moist and warm against his hand and looked up. Through his tears he saw a wavering image of Tricks, a Tricks that stood up on his hind

legs and rested his fore paws on Barry's shoulders and caressed his face.

The image became clearer.

It *was* Tricks! The dog had come to him!

Barry looked for Mr. Burton, but the actor was nowhere in sight. He wiped his eyes on his sleeve that he might see the clearer, but Mr. Burton had completely disappeared. Barry listened, but he could distinguish no voice calling.

Tricks was his for always! Mr. Burton had known the dog would stay with him and had quickly hidden himself and ceased calling!

With a catch in his breath, Barry slid from the bench to the ground and put both arms about Tricks, hugging him close.

"Tricks! Tricks!"

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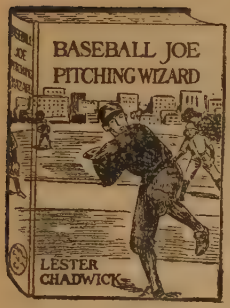

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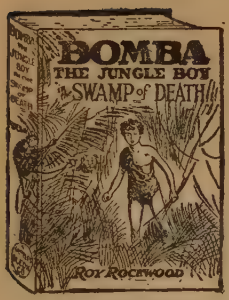

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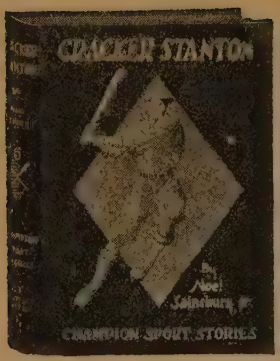

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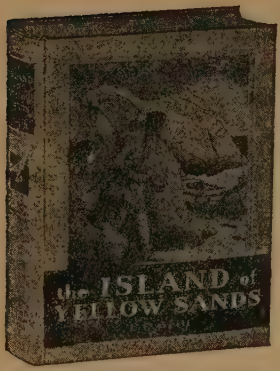

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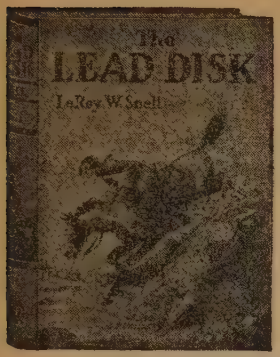

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